ANDREW HELFER • KYLE BAKER • JOE ORLANDO

THE SHADOW®

MASTER SERIES VOLUME THREE



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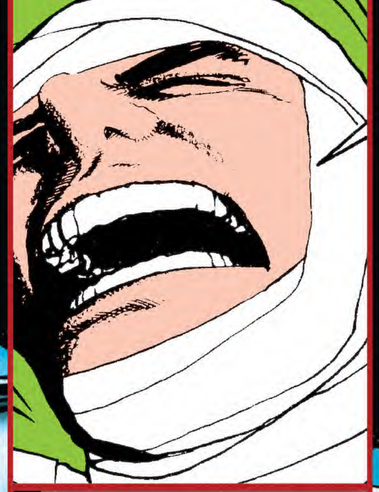
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The Shadow knows...

THE SHADOW®

MASTER SERIES VOLUME 3











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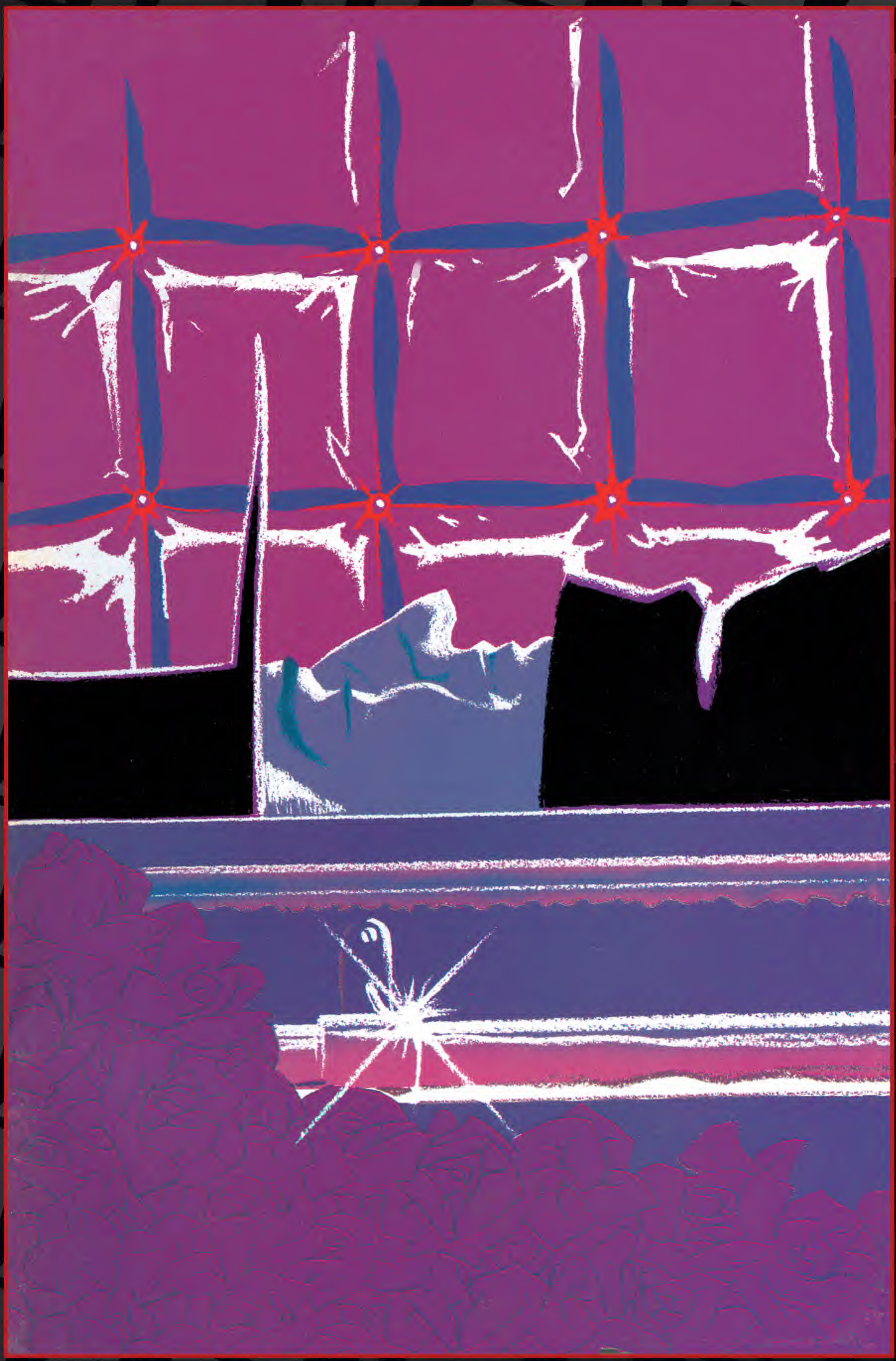
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PREVIOUSLY IN THE SHADOW:

During the decadent 1980s, The Shadow faced perhaps his deadliest opponents yet: the Seven Deadly Finns, a crime family gripping New York City in a stranglehold. When The Shadow's network applies pressure to their vast operations, the Finn brothers push back, enlisting serial killers and terrorists into their ranks. The violence escalates, leading to an explosive confrontation atop the Empire State Building and a shock ending which no one — not even The Shadow — could know!

Editorial Note: *The Shadow* series from DC Comics ends abruptly with issue #19, as a result of being cancelled. It's been said that the creators had more materials planned, but those unpublished materials are not available in any re-printable form.



#14

cover art by KYLE BAKER

EYEBLITZ NEWS

SPECIAL BULLETIN

--INTERRUPT THIS BROADCAST FOR AN *EYEBLITZ NEWS BULLETIN*. HERE NOW, REPORTING *LIVE* FROM MIDTOWN MANHATTAN, IS ROGER *BLUNT*...

YOU'RE LOOKING AT THE *ENTRANCE* TO THE *EMPIRE STATE BUILDING*-- FOR THE LAST FEW HOURS, THE SITE OF THE MOST BRAZEN TERRORIST ACTION EVER UNDERTAKEN.

ACCORDING TO POLICE, THE ATTACK WAS LED BY THE NOTORIOUS TERRORIST MUSTAFA AL SALEHI -- WHO, ALONG WITH HIS TEAM, IS NOW COUNTED AMONG THE DEAD.

OUR *EYEBLITZ* TRAFFIC COPTER IS HOVERING OVER THE SCENE -- AL?

THIS IS *GROSS*, ROGER! THERE'S DEAD GUYS ALL OVER THE PLACE! UMM... CAN WE *SHOW* THIS STUFF ON TV--?

IT'S *NEWS*, AL...

OH...YEAH--

THEN CHECK *THIS* GUY OUT--

--GUESS *HE* GOT THE *POINT*, EH, ROGER? GET IT -- *POINT*--?

GET THAT *MORON*--

--OFF...

AH...RIGHT. UMM... EARLIER THIS EVENING, THE TERRORISTS ANNOUNCED THEIR PLAN TO UNLEASH A DEADLY *BACTERIAL STRAIN* INTO THE ENVIRONMENT--

--THAT PLAN, FORTUNATELY, *FAILED* TO REACH FRUITION. BUT THE QUESTION *NOW* IS EXACTLY *WHO* FOILED THIS ATTEMPT AT *MASS MURDER*--

ACCORDING TO *OFFICIAL REPORTS*, THE TERRORISTS WERE WIPED OUT BY THE EFFORTS OF *S.W.A.T.* TEAMS LED BY INSPECTOR JOSEPH CARDONA--

--BUT WORD ON THE *STREET* IS THAT THE *SHADOW* WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR *BRUTAL* DEATHS--

--AND THAT THE *SHADOW HIMSELF* WAS *KILLED* IN THE FINAL MOMENTS OF THE BATTLE--*POISONED* BY A MEMBER OF THE TERRORIST TEAM...

WE'RE TRYING TO GET A *CONFIRMATION* OF THAT, FROM THE MAN IN CHARGE OF THE OPERATION--

--INSPECTOR CARDONA-- WE'RE GOING OUT *LIVE*-- CAN YOU GIVE US SOME NEWS ON THE REPORTS OF THE *SHADOW'S* DEATH--?

GET THAT BLASTED CAMERA AWAY FROM ME!

G-3951

BUT INSPECTOR--OUR *VIEWERS* HAVE A *RIGHT* TO KNOW-- YOU *CAN'T* JUST WALK AWAY--

YOU'RE RIGHT. MAX--ADJUST MISTER BLUNT'S *HAIRPIECE*. LOOKS LIKE IT'S *SLIPPING*

YES, SIR.

HEY! ARE YOU *CRAZY*? WE'RE *LIVE*-- THOUSANDS OF *PEOPLE* ARE *WATCH*--

OH, MY *GOD*-- I--

CRRRRRZZZZZZZZZZZHHHH

EYEBLITZ NEWS SPECIAL BULLETIN

PLEASE STAND BY. WE ARE EXPERIENCING TECHNICAL DIFFICULTY. PLEASE STAND BY.

PLEASE STAND BY. WE ARE EXPERIENCING TECHNICAL DIFFICULTY. PLEASE STAND BY.

JACKPOT.

GUUUHH--

--eh--??..

EVENIN'.

SORRY TO WAKE YOU, SIR, BUT MY FRIEND AND I HAVE A PROBLEM-- ONE WE'D HOPE *YOU* CAN RESOLVE.

YOU SEE...WE'VE JUST ROBBED YOU-- AND DONE A VERY NICE JOB OF IT AT THAT.

BUT MY FRIEND AND I ARE BOTH *SELFISH* MEN... WE DON'T LIKE TO *SHARE* AT *ALL*.

PLEASE-- I--

--NOW RETURN YOU TO *ROGER BLUNT* ON THE SCENE...

SO EACH TIME WE GO ON AN EXPEDITION, ONLY *ONE* OF US GETS TO KEEP THE *TAKE*.

AS FOR *WHICH* OF US THAT'S TO BE... WELL, WE LET OUR *VICTIMS* DECIDE...

V-VICTIMS?

--SPEAK TO CARDONA AND HIS *SENIOR OFFICERS* LATER-- BUT RIGHT NOW WE'VE GOT AN *EYEWITNESS* TO THE EVENTS OF THIS EVENING--

YES. THAT'S *YOU*, YOU KNOW...

RUPERT TOME--A JOURNALISM STUDENT AT NYU--SAW THE WHOLE *SPECTACLE*, AND IS HERE TO TELL US--

I-INDEED... BUT... UHH... WHAT DO YOU WANT ME TO DO-- JUST CHOOSE? I MEAN--

NO.

IT'S VERY *SIMPLE*, ACTUALLY. ALL YOU NEED DO IS *RELAX*. *WE'LL* DO THE *REST*.

NO? WHAT DO YOU *MEAN*--NO?? JUST BEFORE, YOU SAID--

THIS IS *MY* STORY BEFORE I TELL IT, I WANT SOME *GUARANTEES*. LIKE COPYRIGHT.., A SEAT AT THE EYEBLITZ *NEWS DESK*--

NOW *WAIT* A MINUTE--YOU CAN'T--WE'RE *ON THE AIR*-- THIS IS *BLACKMAIL*--

NOPE, MISTER BLUNT. THIS IS *NEWS*.

CALL IT.

HEADS.

DARN. THAT'S THE *THIRD TIME* THIS *WEEK!* HOWCUM *YOU* ALWAYS WIN?

LUCK, MY FRIEND. LUCK... AND GRAVITY.

NOW COME. ONE FINAL GOING OVER, AND WE'RE OFF.

I LIKE THAT ONE-- TAKE IT ALONG.

THIS IS *REMARKABLE*, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN! ACCORDING TO OUR SOURCE, IN A FEW MOMENTS WE WILL NOT ONLY RECEIVE *CONFIRMATION* OF THE SHADOW'S DEATH--

--BUT WE WILL ALSO BE ABLE TO *VIEW* THE MYSTERIOUS CRIMEFIGHTER'S *CORPSE!*

HEY. LOOK AT THIS.

THE EYEBLITZ NEWS TEAM, LED BY OUR ACE INVESTIGATIVE REPORTER *RUPERT ROME*--

--THAT'S *TOME*, ROGER--

RIGHT--*TOME*--HAS ACTUALLY UNCOVERED THE WHEREABOUTS OF THE SHADOW'S BODY! AN ON-THE-SPOT REMOTE TRUCK IS HEADING THERE AT THIS VERY MOMENT!

AS SOON AS WE'RE READY TO REPORT, WE'LL RETURN WITH ANOTHER BULLETIN! SO PLEASE STAND BY!

THIS IS HISTORY IN THE *MAKING!* AND REMEMBER, YOU SAW IT ON *EYEBLITZ* NEWS *FIRST!*

THINK WE CAN STAY AND WATCH THIS?

WHY NOT. HALF THE POLICE FORCE IS DOWN *THERE* NOW. BESIDES--

"--IT WILL BE A *PLEASURE* SEEING HIM DEAD AND GONE..."

AND SO, AS WE DELIVER *OUR* MASTER TO *HIS* MASTER, LET US REJOICE...FOR HIS MISSION IS COMPLETE. AND NOW, FINALLY... HE CAN *REST*... AS WE... CAN *ALL*...FINALLY...

...REST...

THE SHADOW™

BODY AND SOUL—PART 1

EULOGY

CRAFTED IN LOVING MEMORY BY:

ANDREW HELFER	KYLE BAKER	BOB LAPPAN	TOM ZIUKO	RENÉE WITTERSTAETTER	MIKE CARLIN
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THAT WAS... BEAUTIFUL, HARRY.

EVEN IF HE *WAS* A *SWINE*...

MARGO! DON'T YOU *DARE* TALK THAT WAY! WHEN HE WAS *ALIVE*... WELL, THAT WAS *ONE THING*... BUT NOW THAT HE'S *GONE*-- IT'S-- IT'S--

WELL, IT'S JUST NOT *RIGHT*...

SO... WHAT'S NEXT, MAVIS...?

I-I DON'T KNOW, ELTON. WORKING FOR *HIM* WAS A FULL-TIME JOB AND *THEN SOME*. I-I'VE LOST TOUCH WITH *EVERYTHING* FROM BEFORE... MY JOB... MY FRIENDS...

I KNOW. SAME THING HERE. IT'S LIKE THE *GLUE* THAT HELD MY LIFE TOGETHER IS *GONE*... AND NOW I'VE GOT TO PUT ALL THE PIECES BACK TOGETHER...

FUNNY. THERE WERE SO MANY TIMES I *HATED* HIM-- THE THINGS HE MADE ME-- *US*-- DO BUT NOW...

...I'M NOT SO SURE I CAN GO BACK TO A *NORMAL* LIFE...

YOU *MUSTN'T* BLAME YOURSELF, SWEETHEART... IT'S NOT *RIGHT*-- *HE* WOULDN'T WANT YOU TO--

OH, YES, HE *WOULD!* IF FLAX *HADN'T* KILLED THE MASTER, THE MASTER WOULD HAVE KILLED *ME* FOR TRYING TO PROTECT FLAX FROM *HIM!*

IN SOME PERVERSE WAY, WHEN FLAX KILLED THE SHADOW, HE SAVED *MY* LIFE AGAIN!

SO WHY DO I WISH I WERE DEAD...?

MONEY'S NO PROBLEM, BURBANK. THE MASTER MADE PROVISIONS TO KEEP THE CRANSTON ESTATE GOING-- AND I'LL DIVIDE THE PROFITS EQUALLY AMONG US ALL--

I KNEW HE WOULDN'T LET US DOWN! THE MASTER WAS A *RIGHT EGG* TO THE LAST.

'COURSE, IT AIN'T FOR *ME* THAT I WORRY, Y'UNDERSTAND-- IT'S *LORELEI* I'M THINKIN' ABOUT. WHAT WITH THAT *IRON LUNG* OF HERS--

--YOU WOULDN'T *BELIEVE* OUR 'LECTRIC BILLS!

SO Y'SEE, WHEN THE ARRESTIN' OFFICER TURNED OUT TO BE DRINKIN' ONNA JOB, DEY LET ME GO SCOT FREE!

WELL, YOU WERE LUCKY. ME AND LEN WEREN'T. WE WENT AFTER MA FINN... POOR KID GOT *MAULED* BY A GORILLA...

"NEVER LOST A PARTNER BEFORE..."

REALLY, ALBERT-- YOU MUST STOP. WE ALL KNOW HOW YOU FEEL--

Y'DON'T SEE A THIN', LADY-- YER BLINDER'N *AH* AM!

LEN WEREN'T ONLY MUH BEST BUDDY-- HE WUZ MUH *EYES!*

IN MUH HAID, AH SEE PICTURES A HIM... LYIN' DOWN THERE DAID IN THET *BASEMENT*... AN' AH CAIN'T ABIDE BY 'EM!

MUH PALS ON THE *SHADOWNET*, THEY'LL HELP... AH PUT THE MESSAGE THRU. THEY'LL GET 'IM OUT... GIVE 'IM A DECENT BURIAL...

THEN MAYBE THEM PICTURES'LL STOP... AN' AH C'N FIGGER OUT WHUT T'DO WIT MUH LIFE...

ALL RIGHT, ALBERT. I UNDERSTAND. I'LL GO SEE HOW THE OTHERS ARE DOING...

HAVE YOU CHILDREN THOUGHT ABOUT YOUR FATHER'S FINAL INTERMENT YET? I KNOW THIS IS DIFFICULT... BUT THE FACILITIES OF MY CRYOGENIC INSTITUTE ARE AT YOUR DISPOSAL--

IT MIGHT BE THE BEST THING--

PERHAPS, DOCTOR TAM. BUT FATHER LEFT US WITH SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS.

HE PLACED THEM IN A SEALED ENVELOPE THAT WE WERE TO OPEN UPON HIS DEATH.

AH. THAT IS GOOD THEN WHAT IS IT TO BE? I CAN ARRANGE ANY METHOD--

A SLIGHT PROBLEM HAS ARISEN, DOCTOR.

WE HAVE MISPLACED THE ENVELOPE.

I... SEE WELL, THEN, WHAT ARE YOU PLANNING TO DO?

WHILE WE BELIEVE THAT FATHER WOULD WANT US TO CONTINUE HIS GREAT WORK, WE SUSPECT THAT OUR EFFORTS WOULD ONLY SERVE TO *TARNISH* HIS REPUTATION.

BUT FATHER'S PASSING HAS STOKED A GREAT FIRE WITHIN US-- A FIRE TO CLEANSE THE WORLD. WE HAVE DECIDED, THEREFORE, TO RETURN TO SHAMBALA WITH HIS BODY.

THEY WILL DO THE *CORRECT* THING WITH *HIM*--

--AND *WE* WILL UNDERGO A COURSE OF *TRAINING* TO FACE THE CHALLENGE THAT LIES AHEAD.

I SEE... WELL, THAT SOUNDS QUITE *ADMIRABLE*...

REALLY?

DOES THAT MEAN YOU WILL NOT ATTEMPT TO TALK US *OUT* OF IT?

CANAPÉS, ANYONE?

SEE IT?

YEAH... THAT'S *HIS*, ALL RIGHT. I STILL CAN'T BELIEVE THEY JUST FLEW OFF WITH THE BODY AFTER THE *SWAT TEAM* TURNED TAIL AND RAN AWAY...

WELL, THEY DID. I SAW IT. AND THERE'S THE *PROOF*.

GET A SHOT OF THAT, VIC WE'LL USE IT AS A FILL-IN FOR THE *NATIONAL* FEED.

GOT IT, ROG.

NOW YOU GUYS BELIEVE ME, RIGHT?

WITHOUT A DOUBT. AND DON'T YOU WORRY, KID. THAT MID-EAST CORRESPONDENT'S JOB'S AS GOOD AS YOURS! NOW LET'S MOVE OUT!

MID-EAST?!! I DIDN'T ASK FOR--

HEY!!!

THE AMAZING VINCENT

???

I 'N' I! DOT BE DEM SMART-ASS *REPORTERS* FOR *SURE*! TIME FOR PERCY JENNIFAH T'WARN D'OTHERS!

HATE TO CUT OUR PERIOD OF *MOURNING* SHORT, BUT IT LOOKS LIKE WE'VE GOT ONE MORE JOB LEFT.

THERE'S A *NEWS CREW* HEADING UP HERE! AND UNLESS WE WANT TO *POSE FOR PICTURES* WITH OUR DEAR DEPARTED MASTER, WE'D BETTER MAKE OURSELVES *SCARCE*!

DEWITT--ELTON--SEAL UP THE COFFIN AND HELP THE BOYS GET IT ON THE HOVERCRAFT!

THE REST OF YOU--GRAB WHAT YOU CAN AND USE STAIRWAY B TO GET THE HELL OUT OF HERE! PERCY'S WAITING DOWNSTAIRS TO TAKE SOME OF US HOME...

GUNS

AND HARRY--USE YOUR VAN TO HANDLE WHOEVER ELSE NEEDS A LIFT!

CAPES

STETSONS

NOW LET'S *MOVE*, PEOPLE--THIS IS *BUSINESS AS USUAL*--ONE LAST TIME...

SO... NGGGH... WHERE YOU BOYS HEADED--?

THERE IS A FLIGHT TO SAN FRANCISCO WITH A CONNECTION TO TOKYO LEAVING IN THE MORNING. WE WILL BE ON IT.

BACK TO SHAMBALLA, EH? YOU GONNA DO IT ON *FOOT*--?

WE ARE DISCREETLY SHIPPING THE HOVERCRAFT ALONG WITH FATHER'S BODY. WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO FLY IT FROM JAPAN TO OUR HOMELAND IN LESS THAN SIX HOURS.

YOU TWO JUST BETTER WATCH YOUR *TAILS*-- HEARD ONCE THAT SHAMBALLA'S SMACK DAB IN THE MIDDLE OF *RED CHINA*--

--AND DEM REDS DON'T MUCH LIKE JOYRIDIN' *UNIDENTIFIED* AIRCRAFTS!

NOT TO WORRY, MISTER PEREZ-- WE ARE *EXCELLENT* FLIERS!

INDEED! IF WE CAN NAVIGATE THE NEW YORK *SUBWAY* SYSTEM, WE CAN OUTMANEUVER *ANYTHING!*

WELL, JUST DON'T GO AN' RATTLE YER DAD'S BONES TOO MUCH. EVEN *DEAD*, I WOULDN'T WANNA GET HIM MAD...

DeWITT, YOU INSENSITIVE *OAF*--

HEY, I DIN'T MEAN ENNTHIN' BY IT-- A WORD TO THE *WISE* IS ALL...

FAREWELL, ALL-- WE SHALL RETURN ONE DAY--TO BEGIN FATHER'S WORK ANEW!

IS THAT EVERYTHING?

EVERYTHING WORTH TAKING, I GUESS. THE REST IS GENERIC *SPY STUFF*. THEY BREAK IN HERE, THEY'LL PROBABLY THINK IT'S SOME KINDA COVERT C.I.A. OPERATION...

OKAY, THEN. SAY GOOD-BYE, PEOPLE--

--THIS PLACE IS *HISTORY!*

SLAM

HOW DO I LOOK?

PERFECT, AS ALWAYS, ROG. WELL-- *ALMOST* ALWAYS. HAD A FEW *ROUGH* SECONDS BEFORE WHEN THAT BIG COP--

--NEVER MIND, VIC. JUST GET READY.

ARALE IMPORTS

AND-- GO!

BEHIND THIS DOOR, EYEBLITZ NEWS HAS LEARNED, RESTS THE BODY OF THE SHADOW. AND NOW, BEFORE THE EYES OF MILLIONS OF TELEVISION VIEWERS, WE WILL--

--IT'S... UH... LOCKED.

I GOT THE *KEY!!*

ARAL IMPOR

RUPERT TOME, CRACK REPORTER HERE! AND I JUST WANT TO SAY THAT--

OUT OF THE WAY, RUPERT--IT'S UNLOCKED NOW--

AND SO, FOR THE SHADOW, DARK FIGURE OF THE NIGHT, IT ENDS HERE. VIEWERS, STEEL YOURSELVES. THIS IS--

ARALF IM

--AN EMPTY OFFICE SPACE.

WHERE'D THEY GO?

WE'RE *STILL* ON, ROGER--

CUT IT. CUT IT.

GO TO A *COMMERCIAL*, FOR GOD SAKES!

YOU THINK HE'S REALLY DEAD?

I'M NOT *SURE*, MY FRIEND...

...BUT THE NEXT FEW DAYS WILL TELL...

UMNN... FIRST OF ALL, I'D LIKE TO THANK YOU FOR SEEING ME ON SUCH SHORT NOTICE, MISTER HAND.

MAURICE HAND, PRINCIPAL

CERTAINLY, MISTER BUTTERFIELD. I ALWAYS KEEP MY MORNINGS FREE... USUALLY, TO SPEND TIME WITH THE *STUDENTS*, BUT WE *DO* MAKE *EXCEPTIONS*, YOU KNOW...

YES... I DO.

LET ME GET RIGHT TO THE POINT, THEN, SIR. I'D LIKE MY JOB BACK. MY RECORD WAS UNTARNISHED, YOU KNOW. I--

--*WAS* UNTARNISHED, ELTON. THE WASHINGTON INCIDENT, I'M AFRAID, PUT A RATHER DARK BLEMISH ON IT...

IT'S NOT *EVERY* TEACHER WHOSE STUDENT ATTEMPTS TO KILL THE PRESIDENT--

BUT *SIR*, HOW COULD I *KNOW*--

THAT THE LAD HAD A *GUN* IN HIS POSSESSION? BY *FRISKING* HIM, MISTER BUTTERFIELD, THE SAME AS ALL THE *OTHER* TEACHERS AT OUR INSTITUTION DO.

NO, ELTON. I'M AFRAID THAT YOU WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUNG HAROLD'S BEHAVIOR THAT DAY. AND HIS BEHAVIOR WAS SIMPLY *REPREHENSIBLE*.

YES, SIR.

I'M SORRY, ELTON. PERSONALLY, I ALWAYS BELIEVED THE LITTLE BUGGER *WAS* A ROTTEN APPLE. BUT THE DAMNED A.T.A. HAS ME BY THE *SHORT HAIRS* ON THIS ONE, SON...

GIVE IT SOME TIME... LET THE HEAT DIE DOWN. STAY OUT OF *TROUBLE*, AND WE'LL SEE IF WE CAN'T SLIP YOU IN TO A *SUBSTITUTE* POSITION IN A FEW MONTHS.

THANK YOU, SIR. I'LL DO MY BEST...

AND NO MORE ANTI-DRUG *CRUSADES*, ELTON. HALF OUR STUDENT BODY IS *MAFIA* STOCK. REMEMBER-- THEY MAY BE *SCUM*, BUT THEY *DO* PAY THE BILLS!

JEEZ... THIS ISN'T GOING TO BE *EASY*... I--

EH?

HEY, WALLY-- LOOKIT! AIN'T THAT *BUTTERFIELD*?!

YO, BUTTERFIELD! YOU CUTTIN' CLASS AGAIN?

YOU OUT LOOKIN' TO *BUY*, OR YOU WANNA SET UP YER *OWN* FRANCHISE?

NO? WELL, THEN, WE'LL SEE YA ON THE *UNEMPLOYMENT* LINE-- *TEACH*!

WELL, WELL-- *MAVIS LOCKHEART!* WHERE THE *HELL* HAVE YOU BEEN?!

I... UH... *OVERSLEPT...?*

FOR *THREE WEEKS?* COME ON, HONEY-- THINK UP A *BETTER EXCUSE* THAN *THAT!*

F.B.I. CRIME STATISTICS DIVISION

IT WAS... UMMM... MY HUSBAND-- HAVEN'T SEEN HIM IN *YEARS*-- HE CAME *BACK*...

NO KIDDIN'? FRANK LOCKHEART, STUDENT ACTIVIST, DEMOLITION MAN FOR THE STUDENT LIBERATION ARMY-- WHAT IS HE THESE DAYS-- AN ACCOUNTANT?

NOT EXACTLY... HE--

DOESN'T MATTER, MAV-- NO NEED TO PUT *HIM* INTO THE FILES. HE'S PROBABLY JUST AS REFORMED AS THE *REST* OF 'EM. SO LET'S LET *SLEEPING DOGS* LIE, SHALL WE?

THAT'S AWFULLY NICE OF YOU, LESTER--

--BUT THE ANSWER IS STILL *NO!*

SWEETHEART, HONEY-- COME *ON!* WHAT KIND OF GUY DO YOU THINK I *AM?*

LES, IT'S BEEN THREE *WEEKS*-- NOT THREE *YEARS!* MY MEMORY ISN'T *THAT* BAD!

BABE, I'LL BE *HAPPY* TO CONTINUE THIS CONVERSATION ANOTHER TIME, BUT THE SIMPLE TRUTH IS-- I *NEED YOU*--

LESTER--

HEY, HEY-- LET ME *FINISH!* I NEED YOU *BACK ON THE JOB!* FRANKLY, THE CRIME STATS DEPARTMENT IS UP TO ITS *EARS* THE PAST FEW DAYS...

...THE BAD GUYS LOOK TO BE CLIMBING OUT OF THE WOODWORK SINCE THE SHADOW SKIPPED TOWN! TWO HUNDRED PERCENT UP IN THE LAST WEEK! THE GIRLS CAN'T KEEP UP WITH IT!

AND *YOU*, MAVIS-- YOU'RE THE *FASTEST DATA CRUNCHER* WE'VE EVER HAD!

YOU LOOKING FOR YOUR OLD *JOB*, BABE-- YOU GOT IT!

-- ATTRIBUTING THE INCREASE TO THE RECENT DISAPPEARANCE OF *THE SHADOW*

MOST BIZARRE AMONG THE NEW CRIMES IS A SERIES OF MURDER/ROBBERIES TAKING PLACE AMONG THE HIGH-RISE CONDOMINIUMS OF MIDTOWN MANHATTAN.

PLIP PLIP PLIP

AT THE ALARMING RATE OF TWO PER DAY, WEALTHY RESIDENTS OF THIS DISTRICT HAVE BEEN THROWN TO THEIR DEATHS AFTER THEIR APARTMENTS HAVE BEEN RANSACKED.

POLICE HAVE STEPPED UP PATROLS TO THIS AREA, BUT THUS FAR THERE ARE NO--

PLIP PLI--

WHAT THE HELL--!?!?!

STUFF SEEPIN' RIGHT TRU DA *WALLS*--AND IT *STINKS* LIKE NOBODY'S BIZNESS!

IZZIT WHAT DEY CALL *ACID RAIN* OR *WHAT*--?

GOTTA BE COMIN' FROM OUTSIDE--

HEY!! WHADDA YOU GUYS T'INK YER DOIN?!!

DUMPIN', BUDDY. WHAT'S IT TO YA?!

BUT-- YER DUMPIN' ON MY *HOUSE!!*

YER KIDDIN', RIGHT? YOU DON'T REALLY *LIVE HERE*? THIS IS A *JUNKYARD*, FERCRISSAKES!

IT'S WHERE I HANG MY *HAT*, BUDDY--

NOT ANY *MORE*, PAL--THIS HERE DUMPER WAS LOADED TO THE *GILLS* WITH *CHEMICAL STEW*-- YOU GO BACK IN THERE, YOU'RE LIABLE TO COME OUT A FREAKIN' *MUTANT!!*

AND WE'RE POLITELY SUGGESTIN' Y'DON'T MAKE A *FUSS* OF IT-- OUR EMPLOYERS TALK WID *LEAD*, Y'UNNERSTAND?

YOU NEED A *RIDE* ANYWHERE, PALLY?

YEAH--JUST HOP IN THE *BACK! HAW HAW!!*

MAYBE I'LL JUST *SLUG* ANOTHER *COP*... A *SOBER ONE* THIS TIME...

JAIL'S LOOKIN' *BETTER* EVERY MINUTE...

STRANGE... I USED TO WALK DOWN THESE STREETS IN MORTAL TERROR... I WAS A WALKING VICTIM-- UNTIL THE *MASTER* SELECTED ME...

HE MADE ME AS *WHOLE* AS I'LL *EVER* BE--AND I RETURNED THE FAVOR BY HELPING TO *KILL HIM*...

CAN'T EXPECT *GWEN* TO UNDERSTAND... SHE HARDLY *KNEW* HIM. ALL *SHE* SAW WAS MY *FEAR* OF HIM... NEVER THE *DEEPER* FEELINGS...

THREE XXX HITS! NAKED FOXES WET BABES MY LITTLE PONY 1.29 ALL TIME

25¢ ADULT (hah)

KUNG FU GUY NINJA IKE

THE ADMIRATION... THE RESPECT... BECAUSE *HE* COULD DO THE THINGS I *WANTED* TO DO... BUT WAS TOO DAMNED *SCARED* TO EVEN *TRY*...

"BETTER TO FEAR *ONE* SHADOW THAN TO FEAR THEM *ALL*"... THAT'S WHAT HE SAID WHEN WE FIRST MET... AND HE WAS *RIGHT*.

WORKING FOR HIM MADE ME *INVULNERABLE*... I COULD NOT FAIL-- *NONE* OF US COULD *EVER* DIE...

HE *LIBERATED* ME. IN EXCHANGE FOR MY *ALLEGIANCE*... HE MADE ME *FREE*... TO LIVE *WITHOUT* FEAR...

I *CAN'T* FIGHT HIS WAR *MYSELF*--I'M ONLY *ONE GUY*. BUT WHEN HIS *KIDS* COME BACK TO CONTINUE HIS WORK, I'LL BE THERE FIGHTING BY THEIR SIDES.

UNTIL THEN, I'LL JUST HAVE TO GET ON WITH MY LIFE-- AND *PRAY* THE STRENGTH HE GAVE ME NEVER FADES...

MAGNET PRIVATE INVESTIGATIONS

MAGNET PRIVATE INVESTIGATIONS

SMILIN' LOU'S NOVELTIES TOBACCONIST HEAD SHOP

AH, WELL... THE *FIRST* STEP IS TO FIND SOME *REASONABLE TRADE*-- SOMETHING TO PASS THE *TIME*, AT LEAST...

SMILIN' LOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO PROCURE ME SOME *PART-TIME EMPLOY*--

SMILIN' LOU'S

KEEP 'EM *UP*, LOU-- 'LESS YOU WANT THAT *SMILE* OF YOURS TURNED INTO A *RED HOLE*--

WHO THE HELL--?!

UH... I CAN COME BACK LATER--?

LET'S *GO*, GUYS--!

OUTTA THE WAY, *CREEP*--!

BWASH

OOHH... LOU--YOU OKAY?

OY, TWITCH! IT'S NOT *ME* I WORRY ABOUT! THESE DAYS, THE HOODLUMS COME TWO, MAYBE THREE TIMES A *DAY*! HOW ARE *YOU*--?

I'LL *SURVIVE*, LOU--FOR SOME STRANGE REASON I *ALWAYS* DO--

BLAM BLAM BLAM

WHAT THE--?

MASTER-- IS IT *YOU*--?

UP HERE, TWITCH--

YOU?! WHAT THE HELL DO YOU THINK YOU'RE--

WHAT I *CAN*, TWITCHKOWITZ. JUST DOING WHAT I CAN.

YES... I GUESS IT'S ONLY RIGHT...

TWITCH? YOU OKAY?

TWITCH?

MAYBE A NICE *BROMO*-- YOU'LL FEEL BETTER--

WE'RE HERE, SIR.

SIR?

YOU REALLY OUGHT TO GET A *GRIP*, SIR-- IT'S BEEN A WEEK--

A WEEK, MAX? ONLY A WEEK? SEEMS LIKE AN *ETERNITY*...

HE WAS THE *BEST DAMN THING* THAT EVER HAPPENED TO ME, MAX... SURE, THERE WERE TIMES WHEN I THOUGHT HE'D MAYBE GONE *BAD* -- BUT THAT WAS MY *OWN* STUPIDITY.

NEVER ADMITTED THIS TO ANYONE, MAX-- BUT I COULDN'T HAVE MADE IT TO THE *TOP* WITHOUT HIM...

...AND I NEVER THANKED HIM, MAX. I NEVER... EVEN...

SOB

THERE THERE, SIR --CHOKE-- I *KNOW* IT *HURTS*-- BUT WE'VE *GOT* TO CARRY ON--

"--HE WOULD HAVE *WANTED* US TO..."

--AND THE HI-RISE MURDERS CONTINUED LAST NIGHT, AS SENIOR CITIZEN MYRON KAYE BECAME VICTIM NUMBER TWENTY--

THE AMAZING VINCENT

MYRON KAYE!?

I WENT TO *HIGH SCHOOL* WITH MYRON KAYE!!

-- CONCERNED RESIDENTS OF THE AREA ARE ORGANIZING TO CALL FOR THE *FIRING* OF INSPECTOR JOE CARDONA, WHO IS IN CHARGE OF THE INVESTIGATION--

DAMMIT, MARGO -- THAT'S *IT!*

I'VE HAD IT WITH SITTING ON MY *DUFF*-- COLLECTING *RETIREMENT BENEFITS* FROM THE *UNION*--

IT'S HIGH TIME I DID SOMETHING ABOUT THIS!

--CARDONA, PREVIOUSLY ONE OF THE DEPARTMENT'S MOST *VOCAL* MEMBERS, HAS ADOPTED A LOW PROFILE SINCE LAST WEEK'S ASSAULT ON THE EMPIRE STATE BUILDING--

HARRY-- DON'T GET *CRAZY*--

CRAZY, MARGO? SITTING AROUND DOING *NOTHING* IS *CRAZY!*

FOR GOD'S SAKE, MARGO-- I MAY BE *OLD*-- BUT I'M NOT *DEAD!* I'VE STILL GOT EYES IN MY HEAD-- I CAN SEE WHAT THE MASTER'S DEATH IS DOING TO THIS CITY!

--WHERE UNCONFIRMED REPORTS INDICATED THAT THE SHADOW WAS KILLED, LEAVING IN HIS WAKE A RENEWAL OF CRIME LEVELS BELIEVED TO BE A THING OF THE PA--

DON'T YOU *SEE*, MARGO-- THE SHADOW WAS *MORE* THAN JUST A *MAN!* THE VERY FACT THAT HE *EXISTED* KEPT THE *ANIMALS* IN LINE--

--AND NOW THAT THEY'RE CONVINCED HE *DOESN'T*-- THEY'RE HAVING A *FIELD DAY!*

I'VE GOT EVERYTHING I NEED TO *SIMULATE* THE THINGS HE DID FOR *REAL!*

I PLAYED THE SHADOW FOR *LAUGHS* FOR *YEARS*--I OWE IT TO *HIM* TO KEEP HIS *MEMORY* ALIVE!

HARRY--YOU'LL GET YOURSELF *KILLED*-- AND DON'T COME *CRYING* BACK TO ME WHEN YOU *DO*--

DON'T WORRY, MARGO--I'M JUST GOING TO PUT THE *FEAR OF GOD* INTO THEM...

...BUT DON'T BOTHER SETTING AN EXTRA PLACE AT DINNER, M'LOVE-- I *WON'T* BE TAKING PRISONERS!

HARRY--!!!

MARGO, PLEASE-- CALM DOWN! I UNDERSTAND--

YES, OF COURSE I CAN GET IN TOUCH WITH THE OTHERS--

HONESTLY-- IT'S NO TROUBLE AT ALL...

GOD... YOU'VE *GOT* TO BE *KIDDING*--

I'VE BEEN CHECKING THESE *CRIME STATS* ALL NIGHT-- HE'S GOT *NO IDEA* WHAT HE'S UP AGAINST!

SURE, I'LL HELP... IF I CAN KEEP MY *EYES* OPEN LONG ENOUGH...

WELL, I'VE GOT TO GIVE THE OLD BOY *CREDIT*--WHILE I'VE BEEN SITTING HERE STEAMING, *HE'S* TAKING THE BULL BY THE HORNS--

--BUT I CAN UNDERSTAND WHAT MARGO'S WORRYING ABOUT. WHAT IS HE -- 78 OR SO?

COUNT ON ME TO HELP.

NO FOOLIN'? WELL, SOME GUYS JUST GOT A PROBLEM ADJUSTIN' TA CIVILIAN LIFE IS ALL IT IS.

TELL MARGO NOT TA WORRY IT--WE'LL FIND THE OLD GUY AN' DRAG 'IM TO THIS *BAR* I KNOW...

...WE'LL HOIST A FEW TO THE MASTER AND HAVE THE OLD COOT IN BED BY DAWN...

LORELEI-- I HEAR WOT YOU SAYIN'!

I PICK 'EM ALL UP, HAVE 'EM AT DE SCENE 'FORE DE OLD MON C'N DO A T'ING!

GOT ME BRODERS ALL OVAH DE CITY! I PUT OUT DE BULLETIN--DEY'LL FINE DE VAN, NO PROBLEM!

SIGH...

WHAT'S WRONG, LORELEI? PRESSURE TOO HIGH? I KEEP FORGETTING TO FIX THAT *VALVE*--

NO, NO, BURBANK, IT'S JUST THAT I HAVE THIS FUNNY FEELING...

"...THAT THE MASTER'S LEGACY ISN'T *QUITE* DEAD *YET*..."

...AND WAY BACK IN '36, I REMEMBER HE JUST DELIVERED DIAMOND BART FARWELL TO MY DOORSTEP. NOT A *PRETTY SIGHT*, LET ME TELL YOU.

ALMOST FELT *SORRY* FOR THE *CREEP* ONCE THE SHADOW FINISHED WORKING HIM OVER...GOT MY FIRST PROMOTION FOR THAT COLLAR...NEVER TOLD A SOUL THAT IT WAS A *GIFT*...

SIR?

--SO MANY *MEMORIES*... THIS IS ALL THAT'S LEFT OF THEM...

OH, HELLO, MAX. HAVE I SHOWN YOU MY *SCRAPBOOK*, SON? KEEP IT HERE IN THE CLUB'S LOCKER ALONG WITH MY *OTHER* PRIZED POSSESSIONS--

I'M AFRAID THERE'S NO *TIME*, SIR. THE *MAYOR* IS ON HIS WAY HERE FOR HIS EVENING *MASSAGE*.

I DON'T THINK YOU TWO SHOULD MEET JUST NOW...

I SUPPOSE YOU'RE RIGHT... DAMN CITIZENS' COMMITTEES ARE COMING DOWN PRETTY HARD ON ME, SON...NO REST FOR THE *WEARY*, EH, MAX?

NO, SIR.

WELL, WE OUGHT TO DO SOMETHING POSITIVE ABOUT THIS SITUATION, EH?

YES, SIR.

THAT'S THE SPIRIT--

"--LET'S GET SOMETHING TO EAT."

I DUNNO... HARD TO *TELL*, IT'S SO FAR DOWN.

OF *COURSE* IT'S *HEADS*. SEE THAT *BLOSSOMING* EFFECT?

THAT MEANS *HEADS*. I WIN AGAIN.

HMM... SOMETHING'S *SCREWY* HERE...

TELL YOU WHAT, MY FRIEND. WE'LL DO *ONE MORE* JOB TONIGHT--AND *YOU* CAN BE HEADS. HOW'S THAT?

GEE, THANKS-- YOU'RE A REAL *SPORT*...

OF *COURSE* I AM--AFTER ALL, ISN'T *THAT* WHAT THIS GAME IS ALL ABOUT?

MARGO SAID THAT THE NEWS OF THOSE HIGH-RISE KILLINGS WAS THE THING THAT SENT POOR OLD HARRY OVER THE EDGE--

--IF HE'S AFTER *THOSE* GUYS, THEN THIS PART OF TOWN'S THE PLACE TO LOOK...

THAT'S GREAT, ELTON--BUT WHAT IF *HE* FINDS *THEM* BEFORE *WE* FIND *HIM*?

YEAH! WHADDAYA T'INK THE OLD GUY'S PLANNIN' T'DO, ANYWAY?

DON'T KNOW, DeWITT--MARGO SAYS HARRY WAS TALKING CRAZY--ABOUT THE SHADOW BEING MORE THAN JUST ONE MAN--AND HOW HE WAS GOING TO PUT THE FEAR OF GOD INTO THOSE KILLERS...

IT SORT OF STRUCK A CHORD IN ME--SOMETHING I'D BEEN THINKING ABOUT...

I MEAN, CRIME IS RUNNING RAMPANT SINCE THE MASTER DIED--SO WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF HE CAME *BACK*--?

HE'D PROBLY SMELL SOMETHIN' *AWFUL* BY NOW, I BET--

SHUT UP, DeWITT.

THERE IT IS!

IF HE'S STILL IN THERE, HE WON'T COME ALONG EASY! I *KNOW* THE GUY--ONCE HE SETS HIS MIND ON SOMETHING--

MAVIS IS RIGHT--GET READY TO TAKE HIM--

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THE AMAZING VINCENT

GONE. BUT LOOKIT WHAT HE *LEFT* BEHIND...

OH, MAN...I WAS *WONDERING* WHAT HAPPENED TO ALL THIS STUFF...

ELTON--YOU'RE NOT *THINKING*--?

I TEND TO DO THAT NOW AND THEN, MAVIS--YES.

BESIDES--IF THE *CAPE FITS*...

SHOES

DANGER EXPLOSIVE

ZZZZZZZZZZ

ZZMZMMUUUGFEFGZZ??

SHHH.

SORRY TO DISTURB YOU AT THIS *UNGODLY HOUR*, MA'AM, BUT MY FRIEND AND I ARE TAKING A *SURVEY*...

YOU-- YOU MUST BE THE *HIGH*-RISE KILLERS!

ACTUALLY, WE'RE WITH THE *GUINNESS* BOOK, MA'AM.

WE *ALWAYS* TRY TO HAVE A REPRESENTATIVE PRESENT WHEN RECORDS ARE ABOUT TO BE BROKEN--

--AND WE HAVE IT FROM RELIABLE SOURCES THAT TONIGHT'S THE NIGHT *YOU* BREAK THE WORLD *SPEED DIVING* RECORD!

ARE YOU READY TO *GO FOR IT*?

PUT ME *DOWN*! LEAVE ME *ALONE*! MY NEPHEW'S A *COP*-- AND MY *HUSBAND*-- HE'S--

--APT TO *THANK*--

--US--?

HEH HEH HEH HEH HE

IT'S--

HEH HEH HEH KAKK KOFF KOFF HEH HEH oooh

--HIM!!!?

BUDDA BUDDA BUDDA BUL

HE'S MISSING-- I'VE NEVER *HEARD* OF HIM DOING THAT.

MUST BE GETTING *RUSTY*-- OR--

TAKE HIM OUT.

WHAM

ARGGGH!

HEY-- IT'S NOT *HIM*-- IT'S AN *OLD MAN!*

RAKKK

MAYBE HE'S THE LADY'S *HUSBAND*-- LIKE WE CAUGHT THEM IN THE MIDDLE OF SOMETHING *KINKY*--?

NO-- YOU DON'T EVEN *KNOW* THAT WOMAN, *DO YOU*, OLD MAN?

YOU'RE JUST OUT LOOKING FOR *TROUBLE*, ISN'T THAT RIGHT? TRYING TO MAKE UP FOR YOUR OWN *IMPOTENCE* BY WEARING THAT *COSTUME*, NOW THAT THERE'S A *VACANCY*...

WELL, FORGET IT, OLD MAN. YOU'RE TOO OLD, TOO *SLOW* TO EVER FILL *THOSE* SHOES. THE SHADOW IS *DEAD*, MY FRIEND-- AND PEOPLE LIKE *US* INTEND TO MAKE THE *MOST* OF IT!

WELL, HE HAD *ME* GOING THERE FOR A MINUTE... WANNA TOSS HIM ALONG WITH THE LADY?

NO-- THOSE SHOTS HE FIRED ARE SURE TO BRING THE *COPS*-- WE'D BEST BE OFF.

AND FORGET THE *SUCTION BRACES*-- WE'D BE *TARGETS* CRAWLING DOWN THE SIDE OF A BUILDING.

THIS TIME, WE'RE JUST GOING TO TAKE THE *DIRECT ROUTE*...

JUST ACT NATURALLY. IF ANYONE WANTS TO KNOW, WE'RE WITH ONE OF THOSE CONFIDENTIAL *ESCORT* AGENCIES...

THE OLD BROADS *LIVE* FOR THOSE--

BING

HAHAHAHAHAHAHA

HOLEE--

THE *STAIRS!*

HURRY IT *UP*-- BEFORE HE STARTS *SHOOTING*--

STAIRS

HAHAHAHAHAHAHA

STAIRS

JEEZ--THEY'RE *MULTIPLYIN'!*

IDIOT! *NONE* OF THEM ARE THE *REAL THING*-- BUT THEY'RE *ALL* ARMED TO THE *TEETH!*

WE'VE GOT TO GO *UP!* TO THE *ROOF*--!

HARRY-- ARE YOU--

I'LL BE *FINE*, SON--THANKS FOR COMING TO MY LITTLE *PARTY.*

YOU =KOFF= GO ON AHEAD... I'LL BE ALONG IN A MOMENT.

YOU CORNER THOSE ANIMALS, BUT DON'T FINISH 'EM OFF, YOU HEAR--?

IT'S *MY PARTY*-- AND I'LL BE *DAMNED* IF I DON'T HELP BLOW OUT THE *CANDLES...*

THEY--THEY'RE RIGHT BEHIND US-- I CAN *HEAR* THEM!

FINE--ALL WE NEED IS A HUNDRED YARDS' *DISTANCE* BETWEEN US--WE CAN MAKE IT *ACROSS* THE ROOF TO THE *EAST SIDE* STAIRWELL--

--AND THEN WE'LL BE *GONE* WITHOUT A TRACE!

GOT A REPORT OF *SHOTS FIRED*, SIR -- COMING FROM *GRANDELUCRE TOWERS*. IT MIGHT BE SOME CITIZEN DEFENDING HIMSELF FROM THE *HIGH-RISE KILLERS*--

--THIS COULD BE THE *BREAK* WE'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR!

SIR?

EH? COME AGAIN, MAX-- AFRAID I DIDN'T HEAR YOU GOT TO SPEAK UP-- I'M NOT A YOUNG MAN, YOU KN--

--SHOULD WE INVESTIGATE?

WHATEVER YOU SAY, MAX... WHATEVER YOU SAY...

FASTER -- IT'S JUST OVER *THERE*--

HAHAHAHAHAHAHA

OH NO...

HAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA

W-WHERE TO NOW??

HELL!

WHAT DO YOU PEOPLE THINK YOU'RE *DOING*?

NONE OF YOU ARE THE *REAL THING*-- YOU'RE ALL JUST *CLOWNS*-- *AMATEURS*!

SO WHAT'S THE STORY HERE--? YOU ON A *CRUSADE* TO CONVINCE THE WORLD THAT THE SHADOW'S STILL *ALIVE*--?

YES-- THAT'S *IT*, ISN'T IT? YOU THINK BY PARADING AROUND IN HIS CLOTHES, PEOPLE WILL *BELIEVE*!

YOU THINK YOU CAN *COW* THE CRIMINAL ELEMENT THE WAY *HE DID*!

LOOK AT YOURSELVES! SEE HOW *RIDICULOUS* YOU ARE!

AN OLD MAN-- A BLACK MAN-- A FAT, DRUNKEN *SLOB*--

FOR CHRIST'S SAKE-- THAT ONE ISN'T EVEN A *MAN*!

HOW COULD *ANYONE* FEAR THE LIKES OF *YOU*-- THE WAY WE USED TO FEAR *HIM*?!

IT DOESN'T MATTER IF *YOU* FEAR US, ANIMAL-- FOR YOU'LL NEVER *LIVE* TO TELL...

...ONLY YOUR *REMAINS* WILL SURVIVE... AND *THEY* WILL SPEAK FAR *LOUDER* THAN *YOU* EVER COULD...

PEOPLE WILL SEE THAT THE SHADOW'S *JUSTICE* IS STILL ALIVE AND WELL-- EVEN IF THE FATE OF THE *SHADOW* HIMSELF REMAINS A MYSTERY...

HMM... THE GUY'S GOT A *POINT*--

SHUT *UP*, YOU STUPID--

THE WEED OF CRIME BEARS *BITTER FRUIT*...

CRIME DOES NOT PAY...

...*THE SHADOW KNOWS*--

YEAH... WHAT DEY SAID... AND DEN SOME!

THIS IS THE PLACE, SIR.

FINE, MAX--I'LL QUESTION THE DOORMAN--SEE IF THERE'S BEEN ANY SUSPICIOUS--

BRATTAB BRATTAB BRATT

GRANDELUCRE TOWERS.

SIR--LOOK OUT!

WHAT THE--??

MOTHER OF *MERCY*...

WHUDDDDD!

MAX--GET ME MY *BINOCULARS*--PRONTO!

YES =GULP= SIR!

WELL, I'LL BE *DAMNED*...

SON, I'M NOT EXACTLY SURE *WHAT'S* GOING ON HERE--

--BUT I BET THOSE TWO ON THE *SIDEWALK* ARE OUR HIGH-RISE *KILLERS*... AND FROM THE *MODE* OF *DELIVERY*...

I THINK MAYBE THE *SHADOW'S* BACK IN TOWN...

SO, UMM... HARRY--YOU REALLY *BELIEVE* ALL THAT STUFF YOU SAID BEFORE...?

WELL, *HALF* OF IT, AT LEAST. THE MASTER'S SOUL *CAN* SURVIVE, EVEN THOUGH HIS *BODY'S* GONE--OF *THAT* MUCH I'M *CERTAIN*...

WHAT I *DON'T* KNOW IS IF *WE* HAVE WHAT IT TAKES TO PULL IT OFF...

WE'RE *FOLLOWERS*--ALL OF US. WE NEED SOMEONE TO *LEAD US*.

THE MASTER'S SONS ARE *NICE* BOYS...WITH THE *BEST* OF INTENTIONS... BUT WE CAN'T JUST *WAIT* FOR THEM TO RETURN. I DON'T KNOW *WHY*--

"--BUT I'VE GOT THIS FEELING THEY WON'T BE COMING BACK..."

<UMM...HSU TEI--WE HAVE BEEN TRAVELING FOR MORE THAN FIVE HOURS NOW--YET NONE OF THIS LOOKS FAMILIAR TO ME. IS IT POSSIBLE THAT WE ARE *OFF COURSE*?>

<NO, BROTHER--IT IS AS FATHER USED TO TELL US--"HANG A RIGHT AT BEIJING AND GO STRAIGHT TILL YOU SEE THE STUNNING TECHNOLOGICAL ENCLAVE." SIMPLE ENOUGH!>

<I DO NOT KNOW--PERHAPS YOU'D BETTER CONSULT THE *MAP*--?>

<IF YOU ARE CONCERNED, CHANG, I WILL. BUT I ASSURE YOU-->

<"--THERE IS ABSOLUTELY *NOTHING* TO WORRY ABOUT!">

<PICKING UP UNREGISTERED SIGNAL ON LONG-RANGE RADAR...!>

<HMM...NO *AUTHORIZED* TRAFFIC ALONG *THAT* ROUTE--THEY'RE HEADING TOWARD THE MISSILE BASE AT TIANJIN--!>

<SOUND THE ALERT--HAVE MISSILES READY TO FIRE.>

<MAKE AN ATTEMPT AT COMMUNICATION--TELL THEM TO GET OFF THAT FLIGHT PATH.>

<AND IF THEY DO NOT RESPOND?>

<WELL, THEN, SU--YOU GET TO BLOW THEM OUT OF THE *SKY*!>

<A BEAUTIFUL COUNTRY, IS IT NOT, CHANG? IT IS A *SHAME* WE MUST BEAR SUCH A HEAVY LOAD-->

<THE *MAP*, HSU-TEI--PLEASE!>

<CERTAINLY, BROTHER--BUT FIRST, SET THE CAR TO *IDLE*--IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO READ THE MAP AT THE SPEEDS YOU DRIVE-->

<VERY WELL, HSU-TEI--WE-->

<LOOK AT THOSE *STRANGE HOLES* IN THE GROUND BELOW US! PERHAPS THEY ARE SOME NEW MANNER OF *IRRIGATION* SYSTEM--?>

<SIR! THEY'VE STOPPED! DIRECTLY *OVER* THE MISSILE BASE AT TIANJIN! THEY SEEM TO BE -- *SUSPENDED* IN THE SKY ITSELF!>

<WELL, THEN, SU-- NEVER MIND THE *ALERT SIGNAL*-->

<--JUST *DESTROY THEM!*>

<THIS IS NOT GETTING US *ANYWHERE*, BROTHER. DRIVE AHEAD -- I NEED TO FIND *SOME* MANNER OF LANDMARK BEFORE I CAN DETERMINE *WHERE* WE ARE!>

<VERY WELL, BROTHER -- BUT KEEP *ALERT* -- YOU NEVER KNOW-->

SCREEEEEEEE

<CHANG -- THAT *SOUND* -- WHERE IS IT COMING FROM?>

<I-I-I->

FEEE

<IT IS SO *FAMILIAR* -- IT REMINDS ME OF OUR *CHILDHOOD*... OF *FIREWORKS* -- THE SOUND OF THE ROCKETS STREAMING THROUGH THE SKY-->

<-JUST BEFORE THEY-->

BWOOM

NEXT: A TOWN CALLED MALICE



#15

cover art by KYLE BAKER

LOCK IN ON THEIR FLIGHT PATH, SU-- WHOEVER THEY ARE, THEY HAVE NO BUSINESS OVER CHINESE AIRSPACE!

BUT SIR-- THEY ARE *FLOATING* IN *MID-AIR*-- HOVERING *DIRECTLY OVER* THE *NUCLEAR MISSILE* BASE AT TIANJIN--!

THEN *AIM CAREFULLY*, SU--

--YOU ONLY GET *ONE SHOT*--!

TCHCK

A-OOOO-GA

VROOOOSSS

G-3952

SSSSSSSSSSSSS

SSSSSSSSSSSSS

SSSSSSSSSSSSS

--SOUND! SO *FAMILIAR*-- IT REMINDS ME OF OUR *CHILDHOOD*... OF *FIREWORKS*-- THE SOUND OF THE ROCKETS STREAMING THROUGH THE SKY--

--JUST BEFORE THEY--

BLOOD

WE ARE ABOUT TO *DIE*, BROTHER--

NOT NECESSARILY, HSU-TEI. WE ARE, AFTER ALL, PALADINS OF SHAMBALA--MASTERS OF THE METAPHYSICAL WAY OF THE SHADOW WARRIOR, TRAINED IN THE--

--YOU ARE *KIDDING*, CORRECT, CHANG?

WE WILL FIND OUT *MOMENTARILY*, BROTHER--

REMEMBER MASTER CHOU'S LESSONS, HSU-TEI--

--MAKE GRAVITY YOUR *ALLY*--

--MOVE WITH ITS POWER--

--THEN SLOWLY LOOSEN ITS GRIP--

--AND COME TO A GENTLE--

--STOP-P-P-P!!!!

QUITE A *VIEW*, IS IT NOT?

DID YOU REMEMBER TO TAKE THE *CAMERA*?

I AM SORRY, CHANG -- IN OUR *HASTE*, I LEFT IT ABOARD THE *HOVERCRAFT* -- ALONG WITH OUR *PROVISIONS* AND OUR DEAR, DEPARTED --

CLONK

-- FATHER -- ?

FATHER!!

HURRY, BROTHER! WE MUST *STOP* THE COFFIN BEFORE IT BEGINS ITS --

--DESCENT--

BWANG

I BELIEVE I AM GOING TO BE *SICK*, BROTHER --

NO BLOOD.

BUT THAT *SMELL*...

FORMALDEHYDE, HSU-TEI. *IT* FILLS HIS VEINS NOW. DOCTOR TAM DID A FINE JOB *PRESERVING* FATHER'S BODY...

...IT IS UNFORTUNATE THAT *WE* COULD NOT PRESERVE HIS *WORK*...

NOT TO MENTION THE *COFFIN*-- THE ELDERS OF SHAMBALA WOULD HAVE MARVELED AT ITS EXTRAVAGANCE--

--EVEN THOUGH *IMMORTALS* SELDOM FIND SUCH OBJECTS PARTICULARLY *NECESSARY*.

YOU KNOW, CHANG-- I DO BELIEVE THAT IF FATHER WERE ALIVE TO SEE THIS, HE WOULD KILL *US*--

--THEN, IN *SHAME*, KILL *HIMSELF*...

BUT *THEN*, WE COULD NOT HAVE UNDERTAKEN TO RETURN HIS BODY TO SHAMBALA, EH?

INDEED-- AND *THAT* IS A TASK I NOW FEAR WE WILL NEVER COMPLETE.

YOU SOUND *BITTER*, BROTHER.

I AM SORRY. IT HAS BEEN A *DIFFICULT* DAY.

WITHOUT MAPS OR PROVISIONS, WE STAND LITTLE CHANCE OF SURVIVING EVEN THIS NIGHT.

BUT WE MUST *TRY* TO PERSEVERE. WE OWE IT TO OUR BELOVED FATHER--TO PRESS ON, THROUGH THE SAVAGE WINDS, ACROSS THE BARREN MOUNTAINS--

--TO FIND HIS HIDDEN HOMELAND, THOUGH WE MAY BE *THOUSANDS* OF MILES FROM EVEN A *TRACE* OF--

CHINK

--CIVILIZATION?

FOLLOW BROTHER-- THE TRAIL CONTINUES! THIS PIECE OF PAPER--

UMM-- WHAT DOES "ZAGNUT" MEAN?

THIS DOES NOT BODE *WELL*, BROTHER...

BORN TO DIE

ANGOLA ROOL

...NOR DOES *THAT*...

WHICH DO YOU SUPPOSE *WON*?

I BELIEVE IT WAS A *DRAW*...

AH! LISTEN TO THE *VOICES!* JUST AROUND THIS *CORNER*, CIVILIZATION *BECKONS!*

WARMTH! FOOD! A PLACE TO REST OUR WEARY SOULS!

GO FOR IT

FOR SOME INEXPLICABLE REASON, I FAIL TO SHARE YOUR *OPTIMISM*...

又欢迎病了愿意

DARE WE VENTURE ONWARD, BROTHER?

IF WE DO *NOT*, IT WILL BE *YOUR TURN* TO CARRY FATHER'S CORPSE THROUGH THE SNOW--

LET US *PROCEED*, THEN.

BODY AND SOUL, PART 2

A TOWN CALLED MALICE

A KLEPTOCRATIC MANIFESTO FATHERED BY

ANDREW HELFER — WORDS
KYLE BAKER — PICTURES
BOB LAPPAN — LETTERS
TOM ZIUKO — COLORS
RENÉE WITTERSTAETTER — ASSISTANT EDITOR
MIKE CARLIN — EDITOR

I SUPPOSE YOU'RE ALL WONDERING *WHY* I CALLED YOU HERE...

ACTUALLY, NO, HARRY. WE KNOW *WHY* WE'RE HERE -- NOW WE'VE GOT TO FIGURE OUT *WHAT* WE'RE GOING TO DO ABOUT IT.

AH... YES. WELL, I SUPPOSE WE ALREADY *HAVE* AGREED TO CONTINUE THE SHADOW'S WORK -- AT LEAST UNTIL HIS CHILDREN RETURN TO TAKE HIS PLACE --

--I WOULDN'T COUNT ON *THAT*, POPS --

INDEED... WELL, I'VE BEEN BUSY CONTACTING OUR FELLOW AGENTS AND I'M HAPPY TO REPORT THAT MOST ARE WILLING TO DO THEIR PART TO HELP OUR NEW ORGANIZATION...

LORELEI HAS AGREED TO CONTINUE MANNING THE PHONES, ACTING AS OUR GENERAL CLEARING-HOUSE --

DOCTOR TAM ASSURES US HE WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR CONSULTATIONS AND HOUSE CALLS --

DAVIDA BUCHBINDER SAYS SHE'LL JOIN UP WITH US JUST AS SOON AS SHE RECOVERS FROM HER LATEST BOUT OF *DYSENTERY* -- AND --

BRRRAP BRRRAP BRRRAP

WHAT'S *THAT*?

THE MASTER PLANTED MOVEMENT DETECTORS ALONG THE TRACK TIES WHEN THIS PLACE WAS HIS HQ --

"-- SOMEONE'S *COMING*!

"BE READY -- FOR THE *WORST*!"

NOK NOK

ON MY *SIGNAL*--

--ONE--

--TWO--

-- THREE--!

HARRY!

MARGO, MY LOVE-- ER-- WHAT ARE *YOU* DOING HERE--?

WHAT AM *I* DOING HERE, HARRY VINCENT? I SHOULD BE ASKING *YOU* THAT QUESTION!

THREE DAYS AGO YOU LEFT TO CATCH THE CONDO KILLERS-- AND WHEN JOE CARDONA REPORTED THEY WERE NAILED BY THE *SHADOW*, I *KNEW* IT WAS REALLY *YOU*--

I *THOUGHT* YOU'D FINALLY *CRACKED*--I KNOW HOW MUCH THE SHADOW'S DEATH HURT YOU. SO I'VE BEEN LOOKING ALL OVER THE CITY, HOPING I COULD FIND YOU BEFORE YOU GOT YOURSELF *KILLED!*

BUT HOW DID YOU FIND *THIS PLACE*--?

THE SHADOW AND I WERE ONCE *QUITE INTIMATE*--BACK IN THE *OLD DAYS*, WE SHARED SOME *WILD* TIMES HERE... IT JUST TOOK ME SOME TIME--TO REMEMBER *WHERE* IT *WAS*...

I... SEE...

WELL, MARGO, YOU'VE GOT TO EXCUSE ME NOW... ME AND MY AGEN-- I MEAN, *FRIENDS*-- WERE JUST ABOUT TO BEGIN--

NO, HARRY--*YOU'RE* GOING TO SAY *GOOD NIGHT* TO YOUR *FRIENDS*-- LET *THEM* CARRY ON THIS TRADITION OF *MADNESS* WITHOUT YOU.

I'M PUTTING MY *FOOT DOWN*... AND *YOU'RE* COMING *HOME!!*

OWW--MARGO, MY LOVE--*PLEASE!* YOU'RE *EMBARRASSING* M--

WOW. DAME'S GOT *QUITE* A WAY ABOUT HER, EH?

YEAH-- WONDER WHY HARRY STICKS WITH HER, ANYWAY...

DOESN'T SEEM LIKE HE'S GOT MUCH OF A *CHOICE*.

SO *NOW* WHAT?

I DON'T KNOW, ELT-- *YOU* WANT TO BE OUR LEADER? *YOU* WANT TO TRY AND ORGANIZE US ALL INTO A CRACK COVERT ANTI-CRIME UNIT?

YOU THINK *YOU'RE* GOOD ENOUGH TO HEAD UP *SHADOWCORPS?*

NOW LOOK, MAVIS-- *NONE* OF US ARE CAPABLE OF *THAT!* WE'RE ALL *FOLLOWERS*-- WE *TAKE* ORDERS, NOT *GIVE* THEM!

WE NEED A *LEADER*-- SOMEONE WITH THE *STRENGTH OF WILL* AND VENGEFUL *PASSION* TO GUIDE OUR ACTIONS!

HARRY *THOUGHT* HE COULD DO IT-- HE *MIGHT* EVEN HAVE SUCCEEDED-- BUT MARGO SEEMS FAIRLY DETERMINED *NOT* TO LET HIM COME OUT AND PLAY!

SO NOW WE EITHER FIND SOMEONE *NEW*-- OR GET BACK TO LIVING THE *NORMAL* LIFE...

TOO BAD *TWITCH* AIN'T HERE--HE WOULD'A HAD SOMETHIN' TA CALM THE OLD LADY DOWN-- BUT *GOOD*...

YEAH-- AND SPEAKING OF *TWITCH*--

"--WHERE *IS* THAT LITTLE GUY...?"

MAGNET WAS *RIGHT*... EVERY MAN'S GOT TO DO WHAT HE CAN...

.. AND NOW, AT *LAST* I UNDERSTAND WHAT IT IS *I* CAN DO.

IT'S *MY* FAULT THE MASTER IS *DEAD*... AND I'VE *GOT* TO *PAY MY DEBT* TO HIM...

...DEVOTE MYSELF, *BODY* AND *SOUL*, TO HIS CAUSE...

...EVEN IF IT TAKES A LIFETIME-- OR MY *LIFE*-- TO DO IT...

TWITCH? WHAT ARE YOU *DOING* IN THERE SO LONG? COME OUT AND SEE THIS! REMEMBER THAT BRUISER FROM *BUFFALO* I TOLD YOU ABOUT--

--THE ONE WITH THE *HAIR* ON HER BACK? WELL, SHE'S IN THE NEXT--

--MATCH--

--TWITCH?

GENTLEMEN--IT IS INDEED GRATIFYING TO KNOW THAT THE MANY DOLLARS I HAVE DONATED TO YOUR INSTITUTE HAVE YIELDED RESULTS...

YET, I ASSURE YOU, I NEVER EXPECTED TO *DIRECTLY BENEFIT* FROM YOUR WORK...

THE REINHARDT INSTITUTE

IRONIC, IS IT NOT? THAT I SHOULD BE SO *AFFLICTED*-- AND *YOU* SHOULD OFFER SUCH A *SOLUTION*--

NO, SIR-- NOT IRONIC-- I PREFER TO LOOK AT IT AS *KISMET*. WITH YOUR PERMISSION, OF COURSE.

PERMISSION GRANTED, DOCTOR.

IT IS QUITE A... *COMPELLING* OBJECT--ALMOST... *ATTRACTIVE* AFTER A FASHION...

THE AESTHETIC WAS *INTENTIONAL*, SIR--ONE OF THIS NATION'S FOREMOST INDUSTRIAL DESIGNERS *WAS* PART OF THE DEVELOPMENT TEAM.

HE'S DEAD, THEN?

YES, SIR.

PITY--I IMAGINE HE WOULD HAVE DONE A *SPLENDID* JOB DECORATING MY *BEDROOM*...

STILL, WE CANNOT HAVE PEOPLE KNOWING WHAT MAKES ME *TICK*, EH?

NO MORE THAN ARE NECESSARY FOR *ROUTINE MAINTENANCE*, SIR...

A *SPLENDID* JOB, DOCTOR. YOUR SUCCESS EXCEEDS MY WILDEST HOPES. THE *SENSATIONS* OF *POWER* ARE INDEED *REMARKABLE*.

THE ROBOTICS DIVISION WAS A *CREDIT* TO THE INSTITUTE.

I AM *HUMBLED*, SIR, BY YOUR MOST *GENEROUS* SHOW OF--

NOW DO THE *OTHER* ONE.

IT'S IN HERE. I CAN *FEEL IT.*

DESTINY KNOCKS -- BUT THANKS TO DOCTOR FLAX'S SECURITY CARD, I CAN GO RIGHT IN.

THE *IRONY* OF IT! HERE, IN THE SAME *RESEARCH FACILITY* THAT BIRTHED THE *GERMS* THAT KILLED MY MASTER --

--ARE THE *KEYS* TO MY ULTIMATE *REDEMPTION*...

TO ANYONE *ELSE*, THIS ROOM IS LITTLE MORE THAN A *WAREHOUSE* FOR SCIENCE'S GREATEST MEDICAL TECHNOLOGY--

--BUT GIVEN THE PROPER *PERSPECTIVE*, IT BECOMES AN *ARMORY* FOR A *NEW* WAR AGAINST *EVIL!*

THERE'S ONLY *ONE WAY* TO DO THIS--

I'VE GOT TO GO *ALL THE WAY*...

...*PURGE* MYSELF OF MY PAST-- OF THE PETTY CONCERNS THAT MADE ME SMALL AND MEANINGLESS--

--*EMBRACE* THE DEVICES OF *BENEVOLENT SCIENCE*--

--AND MAKE THEM MY *TOOLS* OF *DESTRUCTION*...

DRUGS ARE THE *ULTIMATE WEAPON* -- AND I WILL BE THEIR *ULTIMATE ADMINISTRATOR.*

CRIME IS THE *DISEASE* -- AND I AM THE *CURE.*

TWITCHKOWITZ IS *DEAD* -- *NOW* BEGINS THE ERA OF --

THE INOCULATOR!

SO, PLEASE TELL ME, BROTHER--IS THIS *CIVILIZATION?*

HEROIN

NAPALM

RUBBER THINGS

PICTURES OF LITTLE BOYS 50¢

USED GUNS CHEAP

NOT IN THE *STRICTEST* SENSE OF THE WORD, BROTHER--BUT FOR NOW, IT MUST SUFFICE.

THIS IS INDEED A *PECULIAR PLACE*... ILLEGAL TRANSACTIONS APPEAR TO BE TAKING PLACE ALL AROUND US...

YES. FATHER MIGHT HAVE PASSED MANY HAPPY HOURS HERE--DISPOSING OF THE POPULACE...

INDEED. AND IT SEEMS THAT THOSE FEW *NOT* CURRENTLY ENGAGED IN CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES--

--ARE *CONTEMPLATING* THEM...

CHANG, HAVE YOU NOTICED THE CONSPICUOUS ABSENCE OF ANY MANNER OF *LAW ENFORCEMENT* IN THIS TOWN...?

ARBITRATOR! CALL FOR THE ARBITRATOR!!

COMING *THROUGH!* COMING THROUGH!

NOW-- WHAT SEEMS TO BE THE *PROBLEM* HERE...?

IT'S *SHILLER!* HE'S SOLD ME M-16 CARTRIDGES FOR MY M-60 -- AND HE *REFUSES* TO *EXCHANGE* THEM!

LIES! LIES! I VOULD *GLADLY* EXCHANGE -- I AM ZIMPLY *OUT OF STOCK!*

HMMM...

LET'S SEE HERE... AH!

ACCORDING TO SECTION THIRTY-POINT-SEVEN OF THE MALICE PENAL CODE-- AND I QUOTE--

"THE SALE OF IMPROPER AMMUNITION, WHETHER DEFECTIVE OR INAPPROPRIATE FOR A GIVEN MACHINE, IS OFFENSIVE TO THE POPULACE--AND IS THEREFORE PUNISHABLE BY DEATH."

SEEMS PRETTY *CUT AND DRY* TO ME... SO...

BLAM

...CASE CLOSED.

NOW DISPERSE-- ALL OF YOU!

UNLESS YOU WANT ME TO LOOK UP THE PENALTIES FOR ILLEGAL *PUBLIC GATHERINGS*--

JUSTICE IS INDEED *SWIFT* IN MALICE...

ALMOST AS SWIFT AS *FATHER'S* JUSTICE...

ODD, BROTHER-- WITH EACH PASSING MOMENT, I GROW MORE UNEASY ABOUT THIS PLACE.

YES--IT IS AS IF THIS *HAVEN* FOR THE *UNSCRUPULOUS* WAS CONSPIRING AGAINST US...

PERHAPS IT IS MERELY *PARANOIA*--

MALICE HILTON

--BUT I BELIEVE WE WOULD BE *SAFER OFF* THE STREETS OF MALICE...

--PARDON?

I SAID--

SORRY-- WE DON'T DO CHINESE HERE-- STRICTLY *ESPERANTO*-- OR *ENGLISH*--

RADIO ROOM

AH! ENGLISH! THIS WE SPEAK!

AND EXCELLENTLY WELL, TOO!

AHEM... YES. NOW WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU, GENTLEMEN?

A *ROOM*, SIR. FOR ONE EVENING ONLY.

THAT WILL BE ONE HUNDRED DOLLARS AMERICAN-- WE ACCEPT CREDIT CARDS AND TRAVELER'S CHECKS--

GOOD! I AM *HAPPY* WE LISTENED TO THE TELEVISION COMMERCIALS THAT IMPLORED US TO CARRY THEM--

UMM... A SLIGHT PROBLEM, BROTHER-- MY POCKETS ARE WITHOUT WALLET...

MINE TOO, BROTHER! AND I AM *CERTAIN* IT WAS THERE WHEN WE LANDED...

WELL, GENTLEMEN-- THERE'S A NATIONAL EXPRESS OFFICE IN *BEIJING*--

--BY *FOOT* YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO REACH IT WITHIN THE *MONTH*--

PERHAPS WE CAN AGREE ON *ANOTHER* MANNER OF PAYMENT...

...THIS TIMEPIECE-- MY FRIENDS IN AMERICA TELL ME THE *ROLEX* HAS SOME VALUE--

WELL, IT SHOULD COVER THE NIGHT'S LODGINGS-- CHECKOUT IS AT 11 A.M.

I SUGGEST YOU TRY YOUR HAND AT THE SALOON'S POKER TABLES-- WITH LUCK, YOU'LL PICK UP SOME EXTRA *CASH*--

UNTIL THEN--

PRESTON!! FRONT DESK!

DING

WHA--

FATHER!!!

WHOOPS.

SORRY ABOUT THAT, BUDDY -- YER... ...UH... BAGGAGE WAS A BIT *HEAVIER* THAN IT *LOOKED*...

HOPE THIS WON'T AFFECT MY *TIP*...

!!!

THUDD

RADIOROOM

TWO X TWO L CALLING *CQ* -- *TWO X TWO L* CALLING *CQ* -- COME IN, *CQ*! COME IN--

:CHRRPKKK: YES? WHAT IS IT, TWO X?

I'M IN *MALICE*, CQ -- AND I JUST SPOTTED SOMETHING YOU'RE NOT GOING TO *BELIEVE*--

TRY ME, *TWO X*...

TWO CHINKS JUST WANDERED INTA THE HILTON -- WITH THE BODY OF THE *SHADOW*!!

WHAAAAT?

I ONLY SAW *PART* OF IT -- BUT IT LOOKS TO BE IN *PERFECT SHAPE*!!

ROUND UP THE *OTHERS* AND TAKE HIM. *IMMEDIATELY*. DO WHAT YOU MUST WITH THE ORIENTALS -- BUT I *WANT* THE *CORPSE*.

YOU GOT IT, CQ.

OH -- AND TWO-X?

YES?

IN THE EVENT THERE ARE ANY... *DIFFICULTIES*... PROCURING THE *BODY* --

-- I'VE AN EXTRA *SPECIAL* LITTLE JOB I'D LIKE *YOU* TO SEE TO...

THE COMRADES IN *CONTROL* MAKE A *MESS* AND *WE* HAVE TO CLEAN IT UP!

SUCH IS EVER THE PLIGHT OF THE *FOOT SOLDIER!*

AND WHAT A MESS IT IS! NO *BODIES*-- ONLY *DEBRIS*, SPREAD OUT OVER *HUNDREDS* OF YARDS!

IT MAY TAKE *WEEKS* TO REASSEMBLE THE PIECES FOR OUR REPORT TO INTERNAL SECURITY--

SIR! WE HAVE *FOUND SOMETHING!*

LOOK! SUNGLASSES! *EXACTLY* LIKE THE ONES WORN BY THE AMERICAN DON JOHNSON!

AND GAILY DESIGNED *SHIRTS!*

AMERICAN *JOURNALS* CONTAINING PHOTOS OF *NAKED WOMEN!*

A PORTABLE *STEREO UNIT*-- WITH *TWO* PAIRS OF *HEADPHONE DEVICES!*

LISTEN, LO-SEN-- *MADONNA!*

WHOEVER CRASHED HERE WAS NO *RUSSIAN SPY*--FROM THE *EVIDENCE* IT APPEARS THEY WERE *AMERICAN TOURISTS!*

THIS COULD MEAN *GRAVE* PROBLEMS-- AN INTERNATIONAL INCIDENT! BUT WHERE ARE THE *BODIES*? SURELY, NO ONE COULD HAVE SURVIVED THE--

SIR! COME *QUICKLY!* THERE'S SOMETHING IN THE CHASM!

WHAT IS IT *NOW*, COMRADE-- *MORE* IMPERIALIST PARAPHERNALIA?

NO, SIR-- *FOOTPRINTS!* LEADING OFF INTO THE UNCHARTED MOUNTAIN PASS!

AH! THEN THERE IS STILL *HOPE!*

SOLDIER! GATHER THE OTHERS! WE'RE GOING DOWN THERE--

" --TO *RESCUE* THOSE *UNFORTUNATE TOURISTS!*"

YOU KNOW, CHANG -- THE AMERICAN SAYING IS TRUE--ONE *CANNOT* JUDGE A BOOK BY ITS PAPER!

WHEN WE FIRST ENTERED THIS TOWN, I FEARED THE *WORST* --I SAW *DANGER* AND *DECEPTION* AT EVERY TURN!

BUT NOW THAT WE HAVE *SETTLED IN*, I SEE I WAS *WRONG!*

INDEED, HSU-TE! THE PEOPLE OF MALICE ARE *ACCOMMODATING.* AND THEIR *GENEROSITY* IS *ASTOUNDING!*

WHY, EVEN BACK IN *NEW YORK*, FEW BARKEEPS WOULD EXTEND *THIS* LEVEL OF *CREDIT* TO US!

AND THE *WOMEN*-- SO *COMPASSIONATE!* I WOULD SURELY HONOR THEIR OFFERS OF *CONSOLATION* IF WE WERE NOT ENGAGED IN SUCH A SOLEMN MISSION...

IT *WOULD* BE INAPPROPRIATE, BROTHER -- AND *SPEAKING* OF OUR *MISSION*--

--PERHAPS IT IS TIME WE RETURNED TO OUR ROOM AND FATHER. IT *IS* GETTING *LATE*-- TOMORROW WILL BE A *BUSY* DAY--

COME THEN--SAY GOOD NIGHT TO THE *LADIES* AND WE'LL BE OFF--

WOOLA?

NOT SO *FAST*, PALLIES--!

EXCUSE--?

THAR'S A LITTLE MATTER OF A *BAR BILL* YA'LL GOTTA SETTLE--COMES TO 300 BUCKS AMERICAN--

BUT--OUR LINE OF *CREDIT*--!

THET WEREN'T *CREDIT*, PALLY-- THET WAS YER *TAB!*

ONLY WAY *YER* GETTIN' OUTTA HERE IS WHEN IT'S *PAID IN FULL!*

GREAT THING ABOUT MALICE-- TEN BUCKS'LL BUY YOU INTO *ANYTHING!*

HELL, YEAH-- THOSE KIDS WERE *LOUSY* TIPPERS-- AN' I GOT A LIVIN' TO MAKE...

WELL--THIS IS IT. AIN'T THE *BEST* ROOM IN THE HOUSE--BUT FOR THE MONEY, IT--

:SNFF:--YOU SMELL SOMETHING FUNNY IN HERE--? LIKE A *WET DOG* OR SOMETH--

HIT THE LIGHTS.

LOOKIT-- THAT'S OUR BUNDLE OF JOY!

THE GREAT AND TERRIBLE *SHADOW*--ONLY THING *TERRIBLE* ABOUT HIM *NOW* IS THE WAY HE *STINKS*... WONDER WHAT HE'S DOIN' ALL THE WAY OUT HERE...

HIS PALS PROBABLY GOT TIPPED THAT THE BOSS WANTED HIM FOR HIS COLLECTION-- PLANNED TO BURY 'IM SOMEWHERE HE'D NEVER BE FOUND.

BUT YOU KNOW-- WHAT THE BOSS *WANTS*, THE BOSS *GETS*--

CAN'T GO *OUT* THE WAY WE CAME IN -- SO OPEN THE WINDOW AND GET READY TO SPLIT--I GOT SOMETHIN' TO DO--

YEAH... THIS IS IT-- PRETTY-LOOKIN' THING... IT--

:*NGGH*:---IT'S *STUCK!* DAMN FINGER MUST'VE *SWELLED UP* WITH THE *RIGOR*...

NO PROBLEM, THO...

SNIKKT

MORE THAN *ONE WAY* TO SKIN *THIS* CAT...

PERHAPS THIS WAS *NOT* THE WISEST IDEA, BROTHER--BY ATTEMPTING TO *ENHANCE* OUR FINANCIAL SITUATION WITH THIS GAME OF CHANCE--

--WE HAVE ONLY SUCCEEDED IN FURTHERING OUR *DEBTS!*

HOW MUCH DO WE OWE *NOW*, BROTHER?

BY MY LAST COUNT-- FIVE THOUSAND DOLLARS AMERICAN.

WELL THEN, BROTHER-- I BELIEVE IT IS TIME WE CUT OUR LOSSES AND *CASH OUT* OF THIS PLACE--

--IF WE *CAN*...

UMMM...THANK YOU VERY MUCH, GENTLEMEN-- THIS HAS BEEN A *CHALLENGING* EXPERIENCE--

HEY-- WHERE DO YOU TWO THINK YOU'RE GOING?

AHH...OUT TO GET A BREATH OF FINE EVENING AIR?

SURE YOU ARE-- BUT *AFTER* YOU *PAY UP* WHUT YOU *OWE*--

HMM...THAT MIGHT BE A SLIGHT *PROBLEM*... YOU SEE-- OUR *FUNDS* ARE SEVERELY *LIMITED*...

WHUT??!! YOU TWO OWE OVER *FIVE GRAND*--!

MY FRIEND-- YOU CANNOT SQUEEZE BLOOD FROM A STONE--

WHO SAID *ENNYTHIN'* ABOUT SQUEEZIN' IT FROM A *STONE*--?!

KLICK

KLICK

AN EXTREMELY UNFORTUNATE METAPHOR, BROTHER...

SAY YER *PRAYERS*, *COOLIES*--

PLEASE-- JUST A~ *MOMENT*, MY FRIEND!

TAKE TWO--

THREE, EVEN!

DMITRI-- GET THE HELL OUTTA THE WAY! CAN'T YUH SEE YER *RUININ'* OUR *FUN*?!

MY FRIEND-- WE ARE NOT *SAVAGES*! HERE IN MALICE, WE HAVE *FREEDOM*-- WE HAVE *LAWS*! WITHOUT *THEM*, *NONE* OF US ARE SAFE FROM OUR MURDEROUS IMPULSES!

HOWEVER *CONTEMPTIBLE* THEY MAY BE-- WE CANNOT JUST *KILL* THESE TWO-- WHERE IS THE *JUSTICE* IN *THAT*?

NO JUSTICE-- NONE AT ALL!

KILLING US WOULD BE *TERRIBLY* UNJUST!

HMM... MAYBE YOU GOT A *POINT* THERE, DMITRI...

YES... WE MUST HONOR THESE *STRANGERS'* RIGHTS JUST AS WE HONOR EACH *OTHER'S*...

ALL RIGHT, THEN--

CALL FOR THE ARBITRATOR!

UH-OH--

BWAM

PING

BUDDA

BUDDA

NOT-- THE ARBITRATOR!!!!!

DAMN *FOREIGNERS!* DON'T THEY KNOW HOW WE DO *BIZNESS* HERE IN MALICE?!!

I THINK THEY *DO*--

--THAT'S WHY THEY'RE *RUNNING!*

DON'T WORRY NONE, DAN--THEY AIN'T GOIN' ENNYWHAR-- LESS'N THEY GET PAST ME--

BOOM

BROTHER-- I BELIEVE OUR *WELCOME* IN MALICE HAS COME TO AN ABRUPT *CONCLUSION!*

OH, *REALLY*-- AND *WHAT* MAKES YOU SAY *THAT?*

GUILTY!

GUILTY!

GUILTY!

OH... WORD OF MOUTH...

THEN WE MUST DEPART THIS PLACE-- AFTER A *SHORT STOP* AT OUR *HOTEL!*

GOODNESS! FATHER! I HAD ALMOST FORGOTTEN!

YES--THE THREAT OF IMMINENT *DEATH* WILL DO THAT TO EVEN THE *NOBLEST* OF MEN!

HURRY, BROTHER! THEY ARE IMMEDIATELY BEHIND US!

WHEN WE GET TO THE ROOM, YOU WILL TAKE FATHER'S BODY AND THEN WE'LL--

--THEN WE'LL *WHAT?* THE MOB WILL BE AT OUR DOORSTEP BY THEN!

HMM...THAT IS SOMETHING I HAD NOT *CONSIDERED*... BUT I AM *CERTAIN* WE WILL THINK OF *SOMETHING*--WE *ALWAYS D*--

FATHER! HE-HE'S GONE!

Y-YOU DON'T SUPPOSE HE--

--GREW TIRED OF WAITING FOR US AND *LEFT?* DON'T BE RIDICULOUS! FATHER IS *DEAD*--

--AND *WE* ARE ABOUT TO JOIN HIM!

PERHAPS *NOT*, BROTHER! THERE IS STILL *ONE WAY* OUT OF THIS *QUANDARY*--

--NOW COME ALONG-- AND BE *QUICK!*

QUITE A VIEW, IS IT NOT?

INDEED, BROTHER--

BLAM BLAM

R-TYOO

PING PNG

--A *PITY* WE DO NOT HAVE THE TIME TO *ENJOY IT*--

GUILTY! GUILTY! GUILTY!

IT SEEMS WE ARE LOSING THEM, CHANG!

ANOTHER FEW STEPS AND WE SHALL BE OUT OF THE RANGE OF THEIR FI--

YI-YI-YI-YI---!

AND NOW, CHANG? THE MOB COMES EVER CLOSER-- AND WE ARE CORNERED AS *RODENTS!* WHAT IS OUR *NEXT STEP?*

AN *ENORMOUS* ONE, HSU-- LET US SEE IF OUR TRAINING AS PALADINS OF SHAMBALA IS ENOUGH TO HELP US BRIDGE THE GAP BETWEEN *THIS ROOF*--

--AND THE *NEXT.*

PERFECT! WE ARE--

CRINCCHHH

YRAKKKLLL

--SAFE--

OOOHHH... I FELT THAT, BROTHER...

AS DID I, BROTHER. BUT AT LEAST WE MAY NOW... HAVE A MOMENT... TO ASSESS...

...THE SITUATION...

LOOK! *ANCIENTS!* COME TO *BUST UP* OUR *VID-CON!*

MAYBE MAILED BY THE *ARBITRATOR*, EH?

MAYBE WE MAIL 'EM *BACK* IN *PIECES!*

BROTHER-- THEY-- THEY ARE *CHILDREN!*

THEY *DO* CONFORM TO THE *LITERAL* MEANING, TRUE-- BUT *LOOK* AT THEM--THEY ARE LIKE THE *WOLF*-- AND WE, THEIR *PREY!*

PERHAPS WE CAN *REASON* WITH THEM-- EARN THEIR *TRUST*--

BETTER DO IT *QUICKLY*, BROTHER--

--I BELIEVE IT IS *FEEDING TIME!*

SOMEWHERE IN NEW YORK CITY...

ALL RIGHT, KIDS-- KEEP IT DOWN-- WE'RE ALMOST THERE...

NOW, WHEN WE GET INSIDE, ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS POSE FOR A *FEW PICTURES* WITH THE *CLOWN*--

--AND THEN IT'S CAKE AND SODA FOR *EVERYONE!*

ALL RIGHT!

YAYY!

NOW YOU ALL BE NICE AND *QUIET* AND WAIT HERE-- I'LL BE RIGHT BACK.

ALL SET?

RIGHT-- CAMERAS ARE WAITIN' TO GO. COUPLE OF HOURS, WE'LL HAVE ENOUGH NEGATIVES TO *RETIRE*--

--THOSE KIDS'LL HARDLY KNOW WHAT HAPPENED TO 'EM--

SOME OF THEM MAY *NOT*, SCUM--

CIRCUS

WHO--?

--BUT I *WILL*...

THIS'S A *PRIVATE PARTY*, DOC--

PARTY'S *OVER*, CREEP.

PHUT PHUT PHUT PHUT PHUT

NGHHHNNN....

JESUS--I JUST-- NEEDED SOME EXTRA CASH-- DIDN'T WANNA-- D--

--IIIEEEEEEEE!!!

PLEASE-- D-DON'T--

TOO LATE.

SUISSSH

Y-YOU A-AIN'T H-HUMAN...

MORE HUMAN THAN *SOME*--

--*LESS* THAN *OTHERS*...

PHUT

LATE WALL STREET STOCKS

THE NEWS

NEW YORK'S HOMEGROWN NEWSPAPER

PANIC ON LONG ISLAND!!

VIGILANTE SMASHES

KID-PORN RING

LEAVES BIZARRE MARK ON HIS TWO VICTIMS!

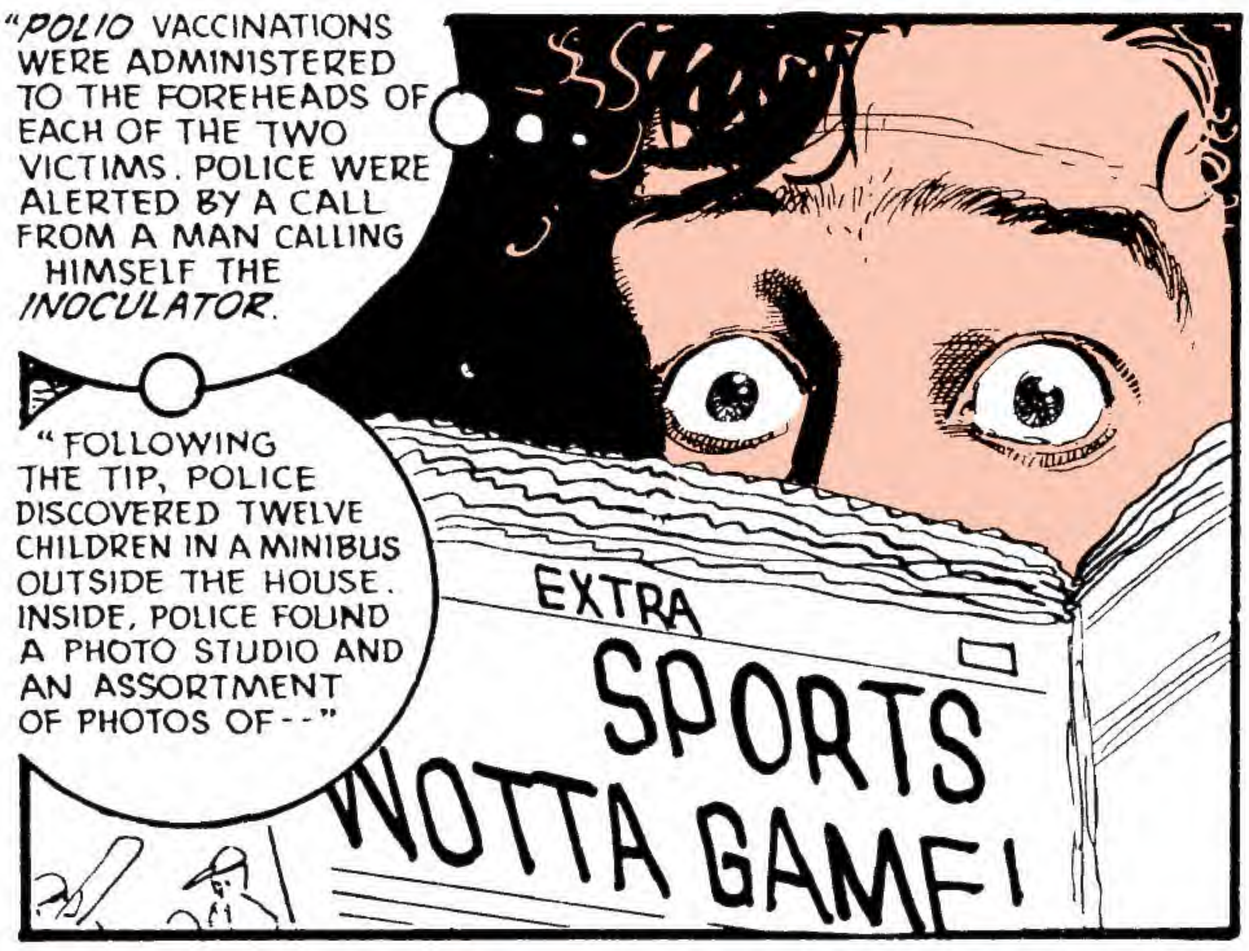
THE INOCULATOR STRIKES...















ZWAK

NIGHT OF THE INOCULATOR



#16

cover art by KYLE BAKER

THE CAMPUS OF MANHATTAN UNIVERSITY...

I'M *SURE* TAYLOR'S GONNA FAIL ME...

DOES IT REALLY MATTER? AFTER ALL, WE'LL ALWAYS HAVE EACH OTHER...

I GUESS...IT'S JUST THAT TAYLOR CAN BE SUCH A PAIN IN THE A--

PHUT

AKKKK!

LORI--?

WHO--

PHUT

UGKKK!

" AT 7 PM TODAY, AN UNIDENTIFIED SNIPER BEGAN RANDOMLY SHOOTING AT **MANHATTAN** UNIVERSITY STUDENTS, KILLING FIFTEEN. AT THIS HOUR, THE SIEGE CONTINUES..."

G-4270

THIS IS ROGER BLUNT, REPORTING LIVE FOR EYEBLITZ NEWS. POLICE HAVE MANAGED TO PINPOINT THE SCHOOL'S *BELL TOWER* AS THE *SOURCE* OF THE SNIPER ATTACK...

BUT SO FAR, THEY HAVE TAKEN NO ACTION TO APPREHEND THE KILLER...THEY SEEM TO BE *WAITING*...

...BUT WAITING FOR *WHAT*...?

POLICE LINE

POLICE LINE

PERHAPS INSPECTOR CARDONA HAS SOME ANSWERS...

--AND HE WAS A *BIG* FELLA, SIX-TEN AT LEAST--BUT THE SHADOW TOOK 'IM DOWN LIKE *RED GRANGE*--

INSPECTOR! EXACTLY HOW DO YOU PLAN TO CAPTURE THIS SNIPER?

POLICE LINE

DON'T YOU WORRY, BLUNT--HE'LL GET HIS--ANY MINUTE NOW, BY MY WATCH!

BUT INSPECTOR--YOUR MEN DON'T SEEM TO BE DOING A *THING*--!

AS PER MY *ORDERS*, SONNY!

THEN YOU'RE RELYING ON OUTSIDE HELP TO GET THE SUSPECT? THE FBI, PERHAPS?

NAHH--INSPECTOR'S WAITIN' ON THE *SHADOW*--!

BUT--THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE--THE SHADOW IS *DEAD*!

MAYBE HE *IS*--AND MAYBE HE *ISN'T*--

"--WE'LL FIND OUT SOON ENOUGH--!"

DAMN. IT WAS JUST GETTIN' *GOOD*--TILL THE COPS CLEARED EVERYONE OUT.

WHERE'S THE *FUN* IN *THAT*...?

POOPS IS WHAT THEY ARE... REAL *POOPS*.

AIN'T NOTHING LEFT TO *KILL*... GOTTA SCOPE OUT SOME *NEW* MEAT.

GOT A GOOD SCORE *SO FAR*--DADDY WOULD BE *PROUD*...

...I'M A *GOOD* LITTLE HUNTER...

WRONG, MURDERER.

YOU'RE A *DISEASE*--



BODY AND SOUL, PART THREE

NIGHT OF THE INOCULATOR!

A SHOT IN THE DARK BY

ANDY HELFER — WRITER

KYLE BAKER — ARTIST

BOB LAPPAN — LETTERS

TOM ZIUKO — COLORS

RENÉE WITTERSTAETTER — ASSISTANT EDITS

MIKE CARLIN — EDITS

DON'T COME ANY *CLOSER!* I-I'LL *DO IT!* I *SWEAR* I WILL!

YOU *PATHETIC GERM!*

YOU THINK YOU CAN ESCAPE MY *TREATMENT* WITH AN *EASY SUICIDE?*

WHAK

THERE ARE *MILLIONS* LIKE YOU OUT THERE-- VIRULENT *CELLS* IN THE *CANCER* THAT INFESTS SOCIETY!

TO ALLOW *ONE GERM* THE *LUXURY* OF SUICIDE WOULD ONLY *ENCOURAGE* THE OTHERS!

AN *EXAMPLE* MUST BE MADE TO SHOW THE BITTER *CONSEQUENCES* OF *IMPULSE...*

YOU WILL PAY THE PRICE.

P-PLEASE-- I-I'LL BE A *GOOD* BOY-- I PROM--

KA-SNAK

GET UP, GERM.

I-I'M NOT DEAD!

WORSE THAN THAT. YOU'RE *MINE.*

WHAT DO YOU WANT ME TO DO? EN-EN-ENYTHING... I'LL DO IT...

START BY CLIMBING UP INTO THAT BELL...

WHEN NEXT IT TOLLS--

"--IT TOLLS FOR *THEE*..."

SO THE SHADOW HANDS ME THIS BIG SACK OF JEWELS--AND IN THE *OTHER* BAG THERE'S THIS FELLA NAMED FARRELL--MEAN PERP IF EVER THERE WAS ONE--I TELL YOU, BOYS, HE--

CARDONA!

WHY, HELLO, COMMISSIONER! GOOD TO SEE YOU! WHAT BRINGS *YOU* DOWN INTO THE TRENCHES THIS EVENING?

THE DAMN *TV REPORTS*, CARDONA! I COULDN'T BELIEVE MY *EARS*! THERE'S A *SNIPER* UP THERE AND YOU AND YOUR MEN ARE WASTING TIME SWAPPING *TALL TALES!*

NONSENSE, CHIEF--THEY'RE ALL *TRUE*! LOOK THEM UP IN THE *BLOTTER* IF YOU DON'T BELIEVE--

SHUT *UP*, CARDONA! I'VE HAD IT WITH YOUR *CRAP*! DO YOU HAVE *ANY IDEA* WHAT *TIME IT IS*?!!

WHY, CERTAINLY, COMMISSIONER--IT'S--

BONGGUUCHH BONGGUCHH

UHH... 2 AM--?

CHRIST--THAT'S THE *SICKLIEST* SOUNDING BELL I EVER--

?!?

GRAB THE *BODY BAGS*, BOYS--WE'VE GOT OUR *MAN*!!!

...ON THE SCENE, AS THE BODY OF THE SNIPER IS REMOVED... INITIAL REPORTS NOTE THE HEAD BEARS THE TELLTALE VACCINATION MARK OF THE VIGILANTE KNOWN AS THE INOCULATOR--

-- DISAPPOINTING INSPECTOR CARDONA, WHO, SOME SAY, WAS HOPING THE SHADOW, ALTHOUGH BELIEVED DEAD, WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE KILLER'S SWIFT APPREHENSION...

HE AIN'T THE *ONLY* ONE...

BUT HEY--WE'LL TAKE WHAT WE CAN *GET*, Y'KNOW IF ONLY WE C'N *FIND HIM!*

BUT YOU CAN'T-- THAT'S WHY YOU CAME TO ME.

WELL... YES.

I'M NOT CHEAP, YOU KNOW...

NOT CHEAP?! ANYONE WHO'D EVEN *THINK* TO CHARGE US AFTER WHAT WE'VE BEEN THROUGH TOGETHER IS PRETTY DAMN CHEAP IN *MY BOOK*, MISTER MAGNET!

THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEANT, MAVIS -- AND YOU KNOW IT.

IT'S JUST THAT I'VE HAD SOME UNEXPECTED... *EXPENSES* LATELY-- LEGAL COSTS NOT THE LEAST OF THEM...

HUH?

I UH... SHOT A COUPLE OF HOLDUP MEN LAST WEEK-- TWITCH SAW IT ALL -- SURPRISED HE HASN'T TOLD YOU ABOUT IT...

LOU'S

NOVELTIES

HEAD SHOP

ACTUALLY, WE HAVEN'T HEARD FROM TWITCH SINCE THE *MASTER* DIED-- FAR AS WE CAN TELL, HE'S JUST *DISAPPEARED!*

WITH A BATTLE-AX LIKE *GWEN* TA COME HOME TO EVERY NIGHT, I C'N UNNERSTAN' *WHY!*

LOOK, MAGNET-- WE *NEED* TO FIND THIS INOCULATOR GUY-- JUDGING FROM THE WAY HE OPERATES, HE'S JUST THE MAN WE NEED TO LEAD US!

WELL, HE'S GOT A HELLUVA MODUS OPERANDI, I'LL GIVE HIM THAT-- AND HE AIN'T MUCH ON *COMPASSION*, EITHER...I MEAN, HE'LL *NEVER* FILL THE *SHADOW'S* SHOES, BUT...

ACTUALLY, WE WERE HOPING HIS *SONS* WOULD-- BUT UNTIL THEY GET BACK FROM SHAMBALA--

LISTEN, MAVIS -- I'VE SEEN THOSE KIDS IN ACTION. STICK WITH THIS INOCULATOR FELLA--

"--THOSE IRRESPONSIBLE LITTLE CREEPS ARE *NEVER* COMING BACK..."

HSU--ARE YOU THINKING WHAT I AM THINKING?

THAT WE ARE ABOUT TO DIE?

NO--THAT PERHAPS DOCTOR TAM WAS *CORRECT*--THAT WE *SHOULD* HAVE HAD FATHER *CREMATED*...

TRUE, IT SEEMS--IF WE HAD DONE *THAT*, THEN WE WOULD NEVER HAVE ATTEMPTED THE JOURNEY TO SHAMBALA...

...WOULD NEVER HAVE BEEN WAYLAID IN THIS TOWN OF *MALICE*...

...WOULD NEVER HAVE HAD OUR DEAR DEPARTED FATHER'S BODY STOLEN OUT FROM UNDER OUR VERY NOSES...

...AND MOST IMPORTANT...

...WOULD NEVER HAVE ENDED UP IN THIS CLOSET WITH OUR *HANDS* TIED BEHIND OUR BACKS...

SHADDAP, YOU TWO!

WE'VE REACHED OUR *VERDICT*, *ANCIENTS*--

--AND YOU AIN'T GONNA *LIKE* IT!

YOU GOTTA PAY THE *ULTIMATE PRICE* FOR BUSTIN' UP OUR *VID-CON*!

UMM... MIGHT I SUGGEST WE CALL FOR THE *ARBITRATOR*--? HE SEEMS TO KNOW WHAT TO DO IN THESE SITUATIONS--

WE DON'T NEED NO *STINKIN'* ARBITRATOR HERE, ANCIENT! WE GOT THE *RULE BOOK*--*IT'S* GOT *EVERYTHING* WE NEED TO KNOW!

"HOW TO WIN AT *PAC-MAN*??

ALLA YOU ANCIENTS ARE THE *SAME*--LOCKIN' US UP, THEN BUSTIN' UP OUR ACTION, RUININ' THE *FUN*--JUST 'CAUSE YOU THINK YOU'RE IN CONTROL!

BUT HERE--*WE'RE* IN CONTROL! *WE* MAKE THE *RULES* *WE* PICK THE *LUCKY NUMBERS*--*WE* GIVE THE *FREE PLAYS*--

--AND *WE* DECIDE WHEN IT'S *GAME OVER*, MAN!

LIKE *NOW*--WHEN THAT *BUCKET TILTS*--YOU *FRY*!

PLEASE! A MOMENT! WE DID NOT COME TO INTERFERE WITH YOUR ENTERTAINMENT--

--WE CAME TO *PLAY!*

PLAY? ANCIENTS *PLAY?* NO *WAY!*

ANCIENTS GOT NO *EYE-HAND*-- ANCIENTS 'RE *SLOW* AN' *FAT*-- DO *POKER*--DO *MAH-JONGG*--

--BUT *VIDS?* NO WAY!

A CHALLENGE, THEN: YOUR CHAMPION AGAINST OURS--

IF WE FAIL, WE PLACE OUR DESTINY IN YOUR HANDS BUT IF WE *WIN*-- WE SHALL LEAVE THIS PLACE UNHARMED...

GO, BART! LET 'EM TRY! ANCIENTS ALWAYS *THINK* THEY KNOW THE *SCORE!*

YEAH! LET 'IM CHALLENGE-- THEN WE *RACK 'EM BOTH!*

ALL RIGHT, ANCIENT... *CHOOSE YOUR VID!*

LET US SEE... HAVE YOU GOT *"SHIITE STOMPERS?"*

NO...

"IRA ATTACK?"

NO...

PERHAPS *"SANDINISTA SHOOTOUT"*

NO...

BROTHER-- I BELIEVE YOU ARE TRYING OUR HOST'S *PATIENCE...*

AL SPACE

THIS ONE LOOKS *FINE.*

GOOD-- I GOT *FIRSTS*--

45 MINUTES LATER...

DAMN! I'M *OUT!*

TOO BAD... REALLY. *AWFULLY* SORRY...

I IMAGINE IT'S *MY* TURN NOW...

PLAY, ANCIENT-- OR WE *END* THE CHALLENGE *NOW!*

FOUR HOURS AND THIRTY-EIGHT MINUTES LATER...

A GREAT WHITE PALACE FILLED WITH MAGICAL VIDEOGAMES WHERE ONE MAY ENTER THE ACTION--AND BATTLE CREATURES WITH THE ULTIMATE ILLUSION OF REALITY...

--AND BEAUTIFUL MUSIC FILLS THE AIR ALL THROUGH THE DAY... A SUBLIME SOUND TO EASE THE VERY SOUL--

SPA

GEE, TOMMY--JUST LIKE IN THE *MALL*--

SHHH!

THE SOUND OF HARPS... OF ORGANS... OF CASCADING *VIOLINS*...

WHAT ABOUT DEF *LEPARD*? THEY GOT *DEF LEPARD*?

HMMM... I SUPPOSE IT CAN BE ARRANGED... BROTHER?

NOT NOW, HSU--I AM *BUSY*! A FEW MOMENTS MORE AND I SHALL OVERTAKE MY *OWN* PREVIOUS RECORD ON THIS--

BRRZZND

OKAY, ANCIENT--YOU HAD YOUR *FUN*--

NOW WE DO *YOU* AND YOUR BLOOD *UP*--*DROP THE BUCKET* AND--

BART--YOU *CAN'T*--ANCIENT WON FAIR AND ROUND!

BESIDES--ANCIENT SAYS HE'S GONNA TAKE US WHERE HE LIVES--LET US PLAY HIS RAD VIDS ALL DAY!

EAT CANDY! LISSEN TO *TUNES*! HAVE *FUN*!

YOU DID?

PLEASE, BROTHER--LISTEN TO ME! THESE CHILDREN--THEY ARE TO BE *PITIED*! THEIR PARENTS--THE CITIZENS OF *MALICE*--LOCK THEM UP HERE FOR *MONTHS* ON END!

THEY NEVER SEE THE *DAWNING SUN*! NEVER BREATHE *FRESH* AIR! AND WORST OF *ALL*--NO *TELEVISION*!

THINK, HSU--YOU CANNOT BE *SERIOUS*! WHAT WOULD *FATHER* SAY?

NOTHING, CHANG--FATHER IS--

FATHER--IS--

UH-OH...

WON'T BE LONG NOW-- ACCORDING TO THE COORDINATES, PICKUP POINT'S LESS THAN A MILE OFF...

'OW WE DOIN' BACK THERE?

COULD BE *BETTER*--LIKE, MAYBE IF WE HAD A *SNOWMOBILE*-- OR A *PACK* OF *HUSKIES*--

COULDN'T AFFORD TO AROUSE *SUSPICION*, MATE--IF ANYBODY FOUND OUT ABOUT OUR *CARGO*, WE'D'VE NEVER GOT OUT OF MALICE *ALIVE*...

YEAH, YEAH-- BUT NOT EVEN A BLOODY *PARKA*?! IT'S *COLD* OUT HERE!!

NOTHIN' BUT THE CLOTHES ON OUR BACKS, AND THE GUNS UNDER OUR BEDS...

ONCE WE'RE COUNTING THE *CASH* WE GET FOR THIS HAUL, YOU'LL FORGET *ALL* ABOUT THE COLD...

YOU GOT A *PRICE* YET?

NOT TILL SHE CONFIRMS THE BODY'S I.D.--THEN SHE'LL WIRE THE MONEY TO US--AND PROBABLY SEND ALONG A COUPLE OF *BACKSTAGE PASSES*, TOO...

IT IS A *FINE* DAY, MEN! JUST *BREATHE IN* THE COOL *CRISP* AIR...

BASK IN THE *WARM GLOW* OF THE *FINE SUN*...

LISTEN TO THE *HEARTY WIND* AS IT *BLOWS* ITS *TUNE* OF--

SAY! WHAT *IS* THAT I HEAR?

MUSIC, SIR! THE HILLS ARE AS THOUGH *ALIVE* WITH IT--

--THANKS TO THE PORTABLE STEREO UNIT RETRIEVED FROM THE AIRCRAFT WRECKAGE!

LU FON... BA DUNG-- MUST I *AGAIN* REMIND YOU THAT THESE ARE *NOT* MERE *TRIAL MANEUVERS*?!

WE ARE ON A MISSION OF *PRIMARY IMPORTANCE* TO THE *NATION*--

--AND UNTIL WE TRACK DOWN THOSE *LOST AMERICAN TOURISTS*--I SUGGEST YOU KEEP THEIR CAPITALIST *PLAYTHINGS* TUNED TO *RADIO BEIJING*!

PLEASE *REPEAT* THAT, SIR--I COULD NOT HEAR YOU OVER THE *MUSIC*--!

NEVER MIND, LU FON. I BELIEVE WE HAVE FOUND WHAT WE WERE LOOKING FOR--

--*AMERICANS*!

WHA'D HE *SAY*?

DOESN'T MATTER-- THEY'RE CHINESE *TROOPS*-- DON'T MUCH LIKE RUNNIN' INTO *WESTERNERS* WAY OUT HERE--

THEY'RE PROBABLY *HOSTILE* AS *HELL*--

WE ARE *SO* GLAD TO HAVE *FOUND* YOU--WE FEARED YOU WERE *DEAD*--

DON'T *TOUCH* 'IM, MATE--PROBABLY WANTS TA PUT ONE'A THEM *CHINESE DEATH GRIPS* ON YA--

I HEAR YA-- THEY MIGHT'A GOTTEN *BRUCE LEE* THAT WAY--

--BUT THEY WON'T GET *ME*--

PDK

UNGGGGNNN

CAPTAIN!

NAIL 'EM ALL!

BANG

PLOOSH

MADONNA!

POW

BANG

BANG

BUDDA BUDDA

RETURN FIRE!!!

KILL 'EM! MOW 'EM DOWN!

DON'T GIVE 'EM A CHANCE TO--

BANG BANG BANG BANG

BOOM

--REGROUP.

WHIZZ

JESUS! WE'RE *PINNED!*

AIN'T NO *COVER* FOR *MILES!*

ZIP

WE'RE *DEAD!*

ZIP

ZING

ZIP

PING

MAYBE NOT--THAT *SKID* HOLDING THE *SKAG*--OUGHTTA BE *SOME* PROTECTION--COUNT OF *THREE*, WE MAKE A *GO* FOR IT!

ONE--

--TWO--

--THREE!!

NARGGHH!!!

SHMUCKS...

HEY--WHAT HAPPENED TO RAL--

--UGNNN--

WHY, THAT DIRTY SONUVABI--

--GUUUCHH

MY TURN.

NOW IF I CAN JUST *KILL SOME TIME...*

POK

POK

POK

POK

POK

THERE IS ONE YET *ALIVE*--HE IS *HIDING*--BEHIND THAT--

--WHAT *IS* THAT--?

CEASE FIRE! CEASE FIRE!

whup whupwhupWH

WHAT IS IT, HONG?

A STRANGE *SOUND*... GETTING LOUDER...

IT IS EITHER THE *MATING CALL* OF THE *SNOW CRANE*--OR--

--AIR ATTACK!!!

TAKE COVER TAKE COVER

DRILL

BUDDA BUDDA BUDDA

VIP VIP VIP

IT SUDDENLY OCCURS TO ME, HONG--THAT IF *THESE* ARE AMERICAN *TOURISTS*--

--I WOULD *HATE* TO ENGAGE THEIR *MILITARY*...

YOU *FOOL*-- LOOK AT THE *COPTER MARKINGS!* THOSE ARE NO *ORDINARY* TOURISTS--

VIP VIP VIP VIP VIP

"THEY ARE *ROCK AND ROLLERS!*"

'ERE I AM, MATES-- COME AN' GET M--

WHUPWHUPWHUPWHUPWHUPWHUP

UUFFFF!

'AY! WHAT ABOUT ME *PAYLOAD?!* IT'S STILL DOWN THERE!!

SORRY, SLY-- HER ROYAL HIGHNESS SAID TO INITIATE PLAN B-- FORGET THE *BIG CHEESE*--

--AND GET YOU AND THE *RIGHTEOUS DIGIT* BACK TO HER *ASAP*...

WHUPWHUPWHUP

--SAID YOU'D KNOW WHAT SHE'S TALKING ABOUT... RIGHT?

--YEAH, MATE-- I'VE GOT ME *SOME* IDEA...

I BELIEVE THE BATTLE IS *OVER*, COMRADES.

THEY WERE *FORMIDABLE* OPPONENTS--

--THOUGH I AM NOT YET CERTAIN *WHAT* WE WERE FIGHTING OVER...

COMRADES! COME AND *SEE!!*

WOW.. LOOK AT HIM..

AMERICAN-- YOU CAN TELL BY THE *NOSE*...

AND THE *EYES*-- EVEN IN DEATH, THEY GLOW *RED*--

--THAT'S *BLOOD*, BA-DONG.

COMRADES! COME BACK HERE! HAVE YOU SO QUICKLY FORGOTTEN OUR FALLEN *CAPTAIN*?

SURELY, *HIS* SPIRIT DESERVES OUR ATTENTION NOW!

WHAT COULD *POSSIBLY* BE SO *FASCINATING* THAT--

--*MAO'S TEETH!*

WHAT'S THE *MATTER*, HONG--

--HAVE YOU NEVER SEEN A BULLET-RIDDEN AMERICAN BEFORE?

YOU *FOOL*-- THAT IS NO *MAN*-- IT IS THE ONE CALLED *YING KO!*

UMMM... WHO'S *THAT*?

YOU DO NOT KNOW?! HAVE YOU NEVER HEARD THE TALES OF THE MAN FROM THE *EAST*--A FRIGHTFUL CREATURE OF THE NIGHT--WITH THE *POWER* TO CLOUD THE MINDS OF MEN... AND THE *FURY* TO OBLITERATE EVIL WITH A SINGLE SWEEP OF HIS TERRIBLE HAND?!

FRANKLY, HONG,.. NO

NOR I.

PERHAPS IF YOU WERE MORE SPECIFIC...

DOES THIS MEAN WE CANNOT LIBERATE HIS RADICAL GARMENTS?

LOOK-- I WILL *PROVE* THAT HE IS *YING KO!* THE LEGENDS SAY HE POSSESSED A MYSTICAL *OPAL* RING--ONE THAT COULD *HYPNOTIZE* WITH A *SINGLE GLANCE!*

LET US SEE IF HE *WEARS IT!*

DRAGON'S BLOOD! IT-IT IS *GONE!*

THERE CAN BE NO DOUBT-- THE STRANGERS WE FOUGHT HAVE *TAKEN IT*-- AND WHO KNOWS WHAT *EVIL PURPOSE* THEY WILL PUT IT TO?!

CARE TO FIND OUT, HONG?

CERTAINLY-- BUT *HOW*--? THE COPTERS ARE *GONE*-- FLYING TOO LOW TO BE DETECTED BY *RADAR*--

TRUE-- BUT THE STRANGERS LEFT A *TRAIL* IN THEIR WAKE-- FOLLOW IT--

"--AND WE *DISCOVER* WHERE THIS CURIOUS EPISODE FIRST *BEGAN!*"

UMMM... I AM AFRAID THE OPERATION DID NOT GO AS SMOOTHLY AS *PLANNED*, SIR...

WHAT... DO...YOU... *MEAN*... DOCTOR...?

THE... *PROSTHETIC*... SEEMS... *SERVICEABLE*...

UH...QUITE RIGHT, SIR-- THE GRAFTING PROCEDURE WAS A *SUCCESS*...

IT'S JUST THAT...WELL, SIR--YOUR *BODY* ISN'T AS YOUNG AS IT *USED TO BE*...

THE *STRAIN*--THE *TRAUMA*-- IS BEGINNING TO TAKE ITS TOLL ON THE *REST* OF YOUR *BODY*--

--YOUR *LUNGS*-- YOUR *HEART*--

YES... YES...WE'LL... GET...TO... *THEM*... *TOO*...

...*EVENTUALLY*..

BUT... FOR... NOW...

DO... THE... *LEGS*...

BUT, SIR--! I DON'T THINK YOU COULD--

NOK NOK

UH... SORRY-- WRONG ROOM...

GEEZ... BET I'M GONNA CATCH *HELL* FOR *THAT*... DAMN ROOM ISN'T EVEN ON MY ROUNDS...

WHAT THE HELL *WAS* THAT, BERT?

I DUNNO, DICK.. AND I DON'T *WANNA* KNOW-- THIS PLACE IS *CRAWLING* WITH ALL KINDS OF *WACKOS!*

LISSEN -- IF I DIDN'T *OWE* YOU, MAGNET, YOU COULDN'T *DRAG* ME UP HERE TO LEVEL *THREE!*

I MEAN, REINHARDT'S THE FRIGGIN' SPOOKIES *THINK TANK* SINCE THE *MANHATTAN PROJECT!*

I TELL YOU 'BOUT THE GUY'S THAT *BOUGHT* IT LAST MONTH? SOME NUT SCIENTIST SPIT TOXIC WASTE RIGHT IN THEIR *KISSERS*--

YEAH, YOU TOLD ME ALREADY, *BERT*--

--AND I HEAR HE WAS THE SAME BOZO THAT *DOSED* THE *SHADOW!*

IS THIS THE ROOM?

JEEZ...I SURE *HOPE* SO. BUT IN THIS PLACE, YA NEVER KN--

WHEW

WHOEVER IT WAS BROKE IN THE OTHER NIGHT *CLEANED UP*, I HEAR--

MANAGEMENT'S KEEPING *HUSH-HUSH*, BUT WORD IS HE MADE OFF WITH A COOL *MILLION* IN EXPERIMENTAL STUFF THE BIGWIGS ARE CALLIN' "*SERIO-INOCULATION* DEVICES"...

PLACE IS *CLEAN*--

--EXCEPT FOR A COUPLE OF *GREEN HAIRS*-- WITH *BLOND ROOTS*...

THIS IS WHERE HE *STARTED*, ALL RIGHT... BUT IT'S A *DEAD END* FROM HERE. IF I'M GOING TO FIND THIS *SURROGATE SHADOW*--

--IT'S A SAFE BET I'M GOING TO NEED SOME *HELP*...

EXIT

WASHRO

SHUT UP AN' WATCH THE *MOVIE*, MAN...

NO WAY, JOE-- YOU OWE ME *TWO* HUNDRED BILLS FOR THE LAST BATCH--I GOTTA PAY MY *SUPPLIERS*, OR I'M OUT OF *BUSINESS!*

GET YER CASH SOMEWHERE'S *ELSE*, LEON-- OR I'M GONNA PUT YOU OUT *MYSELF!*

I AIN'T *KIDDIN'*, MAN--THESE GUYS ARE *PRIME HEAT*-- THEY COME DOWN ON ME, I'M *GONE!*

YOU *GOTTA COME* THROUGH, JOE -- DON'T MAKE ME--

MAKE YOU *WHAT*, LEON--?!

YOU THREATEN ME, MAN, YOU ARE ONE *DEAD JUNKIE*--

JOE-- PLEASE-- I--

EITHER WAY, YOU GOIN' T' *HELL*, LEON-- THIS'S JUST *FASTER*--

NO TALKING DURING THE *FILM*, *GERM*--

WHO--?

MEN CALL ME THE *INOCULATOR*, *GERM*--

YOU CAN CALL ME--

--*OBLIVION!*

AGGGKKKk--

DAMN... I'D HOPED IT WOULDN'T HAVE COME TO THIS... BUT I *HAD* NO CHOICE...

IT'S THE LAD'S *SUPPLIERS* I WANT -- IF HE LEADS ME TO *THEM*, *THAT* WOULD BE A *REAL* SCORE...

IT'S WHAT THE *MASTER* WOULD DO -- OR AT LEAST, WHAT HE WOULD HAVE *US* DO...

WE'D ALWAYS TRACK 'EM DOWN -- AND LEAVE THE *WIPEOUT* TO *HIM*...

BUT THE INOCULATOR HASN'T GOT THAT *LUXURY*...

THE INOCULATOR WALKS ALONE...

ERADICATING THE DISEASES THAT PLAGUE OUR CITY... OUR NATION... OUR *WORLD*... OUR --

--THERE HE IS!

WASHROOM

WENT THROUGH HERE -- OUT THAT *WINDOW* --

--HE--

GOOD LORD.

TWITCH-- IS THAT YOU?

WHA-WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO YOURSELF? LOOK AT YOU--YOU'VE DYED YOURSELF *GREEN*, FOR GOD'S SAKE!

IS-IS THAT *NORMAL*?

IT'S LIFE AND *DEATH* YOU'RE DEALING, MAN--

--OR DO YOU THINK THIS IS SOME KIND OF *GAME*--?

--GOING AROUND *KILLING* CRIMINALS-- WHO GAVE YOU THE *RIGHT*?

IT-IT'S *NOT* A RIGHT--IT'S AN *OBLIGATION*...

I-I'VE *GOT* TO DO IT-- TO PAY *HIM* BACK! I *KILLED* HIM--AND THE INOCULATOR IS MY PENANCE!

DON'T YOU *SEE*?! HE-HE WON'T *LET* ME GO! HE'LL *NEVER* LET ME GO!

NOT UNTIL IT'S *OVER*... FOR *THEM*... OR FOR *ME*...

DEAR GOD...

WHAT HAVE I BECOME?! I--

GREEECHHHH

--BEEN *LOOKIN'* FOR YOU, LEON...

PLEASE, MAN--I *TRIED* T'GET THE MONEY--DON'T HURT ME NO MORE--

--THOUGHT YOU COULD GET *AWAY*, EH? FIGGERED YOU'D *KNOW* BETTER!

WE GOT *THOUSANDS* T'LOOK FOR *YOU*-- JUST ON OUR *SAY-SO*! PUT OUT THE *CALL*-- AND HERE YOU *ARE*!

HEH. SOMEONE SHOULD'A TOLD YOU, KIDDO--YOU PLAN TO STEER CLEAR OF *US*--

--YOU GOTTA LEAVE THE *CITY!*

WHATTSAMATTER, LEON? DON'T FEEL SO *GOOD?*

NOW, IF YOU LIVE OUT THE *NIGHT*, WE WANT YOU BACK ON THE STREETS *TOMORROW*, LEON--

MAKE *SURE* YOU TELL ALL YOUR *FRIENDS* ABOUT HOW WE TREAT *BAD BOYS* LIKE *YOU*...

AND WHILE YOU'RE DOING *THAT* REMIND THEM HOW I TREAT *DISEASES* LIKE *THEM*--

I AM THE *INOCULATOR*, GERM--

I *KNOW* WHO YOU ARE-- THERE'S APB'S OUT ON YOU ALL OVER THE CITY!

WHAT I WANT TO KNOW IS WHERE THE *HELL* DID YOU *COME FROM*--?

THE SAME PLACE YOU'RE *GOING*--

ARGGHHHA

--*HELL!*

SHIT, SOLLY-- THAT'S *IT* FOR ME I'M GOING *BOWLING!*

TAKE IT EASY, LEON--I'VE GOT SOMETHING FOR THE PAIN HERE--

TH-THOUGHT... YOU JUSSS WAN'ED T' K-KILL ME, MAN...

THAT WAS *BEFORE*, LEON--I'M SEEING THINGS A BIT *DIFFERENTLY* NOW--

PWOOM

ARGGGHHH!

MISTER, YOU'RE UNDER *ARREST.*

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO REMAIN SILENT.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO AN ATTORNEY.. ANYTHING YOU SAY CAN--

--KEEP STILL, MISTER--

--AND WILL BE USED--

--I SAID. *DON'T MOVE*--

--AGAINST YOU IN A--

--THAT'S *IT!!*

YOU LEAVE ME NO *CHOICE* NOW-- BUT TO *SHOOT* TO--

--KILL--?

PWOP

CLUMPP

MY GOD...HE WAS...GOING TO.. MURDER ME...IN.. COLD BLOOD... WHAT... MADE HIM...?

OH... LEON...

LEON...?

THIS ISN'T... OVER YET...

I STILL HAVE A LINGERING DOUBT, BROTHER...

NONSENSE, *HSU*--WE HAVE A MAP--WE HAVE A *PLAN*--WHAT COULD POSSIBLY GO *WRONG*?

APTAIN NJA

ROCKET PATROL

I AM UNCERTAIN, CHANG--

AMUSEMENTS

--BUT *SOMETHING* ALWAYS *DOES*...

KIDZ ONLY

Ancients Keep Out

ALL WE NEED DO IS *REMAIN QUIET* AND PROCEED *CAREFULLY*.

THE CHILDREN HAVE *PROMISED* A *DIVERSION* FOR THE MOB, SO THAT WE MAY FREELY SEEK OUT FATHER'S *KIDNAPPERS*.

TELL ME, CHANG--DID THE CHILDREN *TELL* YOU WHAT THIS *DIVERSION* WAS GOING TO BE--?

NO, BROTHER, BUT I--

BWOOOM

--SUSPECT IT WAS RATHER *HASTILY CONCEIVED*--

RUN!!!

MALICE MANSION

THERE! IF THERE ARE *ANY* CLUES TO BE *HAD*--IT WILL BE IN THE *HOTEL*--THE PLACE WHERE OUR DEAR DEPARTED FATHER WAS FIRST *TAKEN* FROM US!

YOU CHILDREN STAY HERE AND KEEP A *WATCH*--WE SHALL RETURN *PROMPTLY*!

NOW-- WHERE TO *BEGIN* OUR *INQUIRY*--?

WELCOME TO THE MALICE HILTON, FOLKS--

TAKE YER BAGS, MA'AM-- SIR--?

YOU! YOU WITNESSED OUR *ARRIVAL*-- SAW THE *BAGGAGE* WE *CARRIED!*

SURELY YOU MUST HAVE *WITNESSED* SOMETHING *SUSPICIOUS* DURING THE NIGHT--

--PERHAPS *ASSISTED* IN OUR FATHER'S *ABDUCTION*, EH?

HEY--YOU *ACCUSING* ME OF *SOMETHING*?

'CAUSE IF YOU *ARE*-- YOU BETTER BE ABLE TO *BACK IT UP!*

FALSE ACCUSING IS A CLASS "A" *FELONY* IN *MALICE*-- AN' I'M CALLING FOR THE *ARBITRATOR* TO *PRESIDE* OVER *THIS* ARGUMENT--

ARBITRATOR! ARBITRATOR!

QUIET, YOU LITTLE--

LEAVE HIM *ALONE*, YOU TWO! IT'S HIS *GOD-GIVEN* RIGHT AS A CITIZEN OF MALICE TO HAVE PROPER *JURISPRUDENCE*--

I'VE *JUST* PHONED THEM UP. THEY'RE ON THEIR WAY.

THEN THAT IS *OUR* CUE *TOO*, BROTHER--TAKE THE *LITTLE ONE* ALONG FOR *INTERROGATION*--

YES--AND BEFORE IT IS *TOO* LATE...

MURGPHHH!

...LET US BE BE GETTING THE *HELL* OUT OF HERE!

MALICE HILTON.

FASTER CHILDREN-- BUT *DON'T PUSH--*

MRGGGHHHPHHH

HEY! THIS IS *FUN!*

BETTER'N THE *ROAD AND TRACK VID*, EH?

GUILTY!

GUILTY!

GUILTY!!

THERE IT IS, BROTHER-- JUST BEYOND THE *GATES-- FREEDOM!*

INDEED BROTHER-- AND I AM *ALREADY* FORMULATING A *PLAN!*

IF WE CAN JUST PASS THROUGH--HIDE IN THE *HILLS*-- WE WILL BE ABLE TO FIND OUT ALL WE NEED TO KNOW FROM OUR *DIMINUTIVE FRIEND*--AND STAGE OUR NEXT ASSAULT ON--

UH-OH...

NOW, *LOOK*, *CARDONA*--*YOU* MAY BE THE MAYOR'S *PRETTY BOY*--BUT I'M STILL THE *BOSS* AROUND HERE, DAMMIT!

YOU WANNA BE A *STOOGE* FOR EVERY COSTUMED VIGILANTE COMES DOWN THE PIKE--DO IT IN *ANOTHER TOWN!* I'VE HAD--

J. BARRIMORE MARX

POLICE COMMISSIONER

RINNNG RINNGG

UH...HI, HONEY--HOW'S MY LOVEY-DOVEY DOING TONIGHT--?

OH, THAT'S TOO BAD SWEETUMS-- UH--

HANG ON A SEC--

IT'S THE MISSUS, JOE-- SHE'S--UH--GOING THROUGH A HARD TIME-- CHANGE OF LIFE AN' ALL--YOU KNOW HOW IT IS--

--BE A GOOD FELLOW AND GIVE ME A FEW MINUTES ALONE-- LET ME CALM HER DOWN. JUST WAIT RIGHT OUTSIDE. OKAY--?

YOU WERE *SAYING*, DEAR--?

....

SLAM

ALL RIGHT... GO AHEAD AND SPILL IT, MIKE.

YOU BELIEVE THAT, *MAX*?

WHY, BACK IN THE *OLD* DAYS, MY CONNECTION WITH THE SHADOW MADE ME THE FORCE'S MOST *VALUED* DETECTIVE...

...NOW THAT *CREEP* MAKES IT SOUND LIKE SOMETHING *DIRTY!*

WELL, SIR-- WE WERE *EXPECTING* THE SHADOW-- TOO BAD THE INOCULATOR SHOWED UP INSTEAD--

BEEN TRYIN' T'GET IT OUTTA MY *HEAD*--FIGGERED A FEW *FRAMES* WOULD MAKE IT GO AWAY-- BUT IT *WON'T!*

HE-HE JUST *WIPED* OUT DWIGHT AND O'CONNER-- ZAPPED 'EM WITH HIS *NEEDLE GUNS!*

WE WERE SHAKING DOWN THIS *PUNK*-- THE USUAL STUFF-- AND HE JUST COMES OUTTA *NOWHERE!*

ALL RIGHT, MIKE-- JUST RELAX.

BUT WHAT IF HE *GOES PUBLIC*-- WHAT HE SEEN COULD *SCREW* US *ALL*--

MIKE-- ONLY *ONE GUY'S* GONNA GET SCREWED HERE-- IT'S THAT INOCULATOR FELLA!

THERE'S *LOTS* O' PEOPLE OUT THERE DON'T TAKE TOO KINDLY TO *COP KILLERS*--

--*ESPECIALLY* WHEN THEY *DON'T KNOW* THEY WERE *MOONLIGHTING* AS *JUNK DEALERS!*

ADDRESSES

ONCE THE NEWS GETS *OUT*, BETWEEN THE *PRESS* AND THE *PBA*, THE *WHOLE CITY* IS GONNA BE LOOKING FOR THIS GUY!

ONLY THING *WE* GOTTA MAKE SURE OF IS HE DOESN'T GET TAKEN *ALIVE*--

"--AND I KNOW *JUST* THE PEOPLE TO MAKE SURE HE *DOESN'T!*"

CENTRAL COLLISION-- MAY I HELP Y--

--OH. HELLO, J.M.

HOLD ON A SEC-- I'LL PUT YOU RIGHT THROUGH...

HMMM... JUST *TERRIBLE*... YES... I AGREE *WHOLEHEARTEDLY*. YOU KNOW MY FEELINGS ON THIS, J.M.--

--SCUM LIKE THAT DOESN'T *DESERVE* OUR LEGAL SYSTEM. EXPEDIENCE--THAT'S WHAT COUNTS IN THESE CASES.

STILL, WITH ALL THE PUBLICITY YOU'RE ANTICIPATING, IT SOUNDS LIKE WE'RE GOING TO HAVE TO GO PRETTY *DEEP COVER* ON THIS ONE, J.M.--

--MUCH AS WE BOTH *BELIEVE* IN A *SWIFT JUSTICE*, NEITHER OF OUR ORGANIZATIONS CAN AFFORD TO HAVE OUR ACTIONS TRACED BACK TO US...

LET'S SEE, NOW...

AH... HERE'S THE ONE. SEVENTY-EIGHT YEARS OLD. NO FAMILY. *OFFICIALLY* INACTIVE SINCE 1965. STRICTLY *FREELANCE*-- BUT HIS *KILLS* ARE *IMPRESSIVE*...

NO ADDRESS-- BUT THERE'S A *PHONE NUMBER* HERE...

IMAGES UNLIMITED
COSTUME SUPPLY

SO-- HOW DO YOU LIKE *THIS* ONE, MA'AM? IT'S OUR BEST-SELLING MODEL...

IT'S *HORRID*-- BUT I SUPPOSE MY GRANDSON WILL LOVE IT... SO WRAP IT UP...

A FINE SELECTION, DEAR-- I--

BEEP BEEP BEEP

FAKE BLOOD!

YOU'RE *BEEPING* YOUNG MAN--

IT'S UH... NOTHING.

I'LL JUST RUN IN THE BACK AND GET YOU A *FRESH MASK*... WON'T BE A MINUTE...

HERE I GO AGAIN...

CENTRAL COLLISION--

HELLO, SHIRL...

I'D LIKE TO MAKE A PICK-UP...

NEXT▶ NIGHT OF THE AVENGER



#17

cover art by KYLE BAKER

HERE TO MAKE A *PICK-UP* FROM MISTER STONE, FRIEND.

GOTCHA. TAKE ER TO NUMBER THREE.

BETTER FASTEN THAT *SEAT BELT* WHILE YOU'RE AT IT-- HYDRAULIC'S ACTING UP A BIT TODAY...

G·4271

SO'S MY *ULCER*, NOW THAT HE MENTIONS IT...

IT'S *NERVES*... GUESS I STILL HAVEN'T FORGOTTEN MY *LAST* ASSIGNMENT...

...BUT THAT WAS *YEARS* AGO...

IT'LL BE DIFFERENT THIS TIME...

GET IN, DO THE JOB, COLLECT THE CASH AND GO HOME. EASY.

SURE.

...SO WHY DO I HAVE THIS *SINKING* FEELING...?

AHH... LIGHTEN UP, BENSON.

LET'S SEE NOW... WHAT'S IT GOING TO BE *THIS* TIME...?

ALWAYS PAYS TO KEEP 'EM ON THEIR *TOES*...

BESIDES... I HAVE A *REPUTATION* TO MAINTAIN...

NAH... TOO PREDICTABLE...

HMMM... A BIT *SEVERE*...

AHH, YES... PERFECT.

VISUAL IDENTIFICATION... UHH... CONFIRMED...

GOOD MORNING, MISTER STONE.

SO FAR, SO GOOD... LET'S SEE HOW FAR I CAN TAKE IT...

...SEE IF I'VE STILL GOT THE OLD *MAGIC TOUCH*...

GOOD MORNING, MISTER STONE.

'MORNING, KIDDO...

"KIDDO?"

GOOD MORNING, MISTER STONE.

MISTER STONE-- I'M FEELING A LITTLE *SICK* TODAY, AND I WAS WONDERING--

CERTAINLY, MY DEAR-- TAKE THE DAY-- TAKE THE *WEEK*! BE MY GUEST!

'MORNING, SHIRL-- BUZZ ME THROUGH WILL YOU?

MISTER STONE?! BUT I THOUGHT YOU WERE ALREADY *INSIDE* AND--

--AND YOU SHAVED OFF YOUR *MOUSTACHE*!

JUST A MINUTE AGO, SHIRL-- LIKE IT?

YES MA'AM! TIME FOR ME TO SHAKE OFF THE *OLD* AND GET INTO THE *EIGHTIES*!

I WAS GETTING *TIRED* OF THAT PENCIL-THIN NUMBER-- MADE ME LOOK LIKE A 1940's *HOLLYWOOD EXTRA*, DON'T YOU THINK?

WELL... *YES*, NOW THAT YOU--

STONE

GOOD! *GOOD*! I *ADMIRE* HONESTY IN MY EMPLOYEES!

NOW, THEN-- LET'S GET TO *WORK*, SHALL WE--?

EH?

GOOD GOD--!!!

I BELIEVE YOU *CALLED* FOR ME, *REGGIE*--

--AND WHEN *REG STONE* CALLS--

the Avenger™

COMES RUNNING!

BODY AND SOUL, PART 4:

NIGHT OF THE AVENGER

A TALE OF MISTAKEN IDENTITY BY

ANDY HELFER — WORDS
KYLE BAKER — PICTURES
BOB LAPPAN — LETTERS
TOM ZIUKO — COLORS
RENEÉ WITTERSTAETTER — ASSISTANT EDITS
MIKE CARLIN — EDITS

OH. IT'S YOU.

FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE, RICHARD! WHEN ARE YOU GOING TO STOP PLAYING *GAMES* AND *GROW UP*?

THIS IS A *PLACE* OF *BUSINESS* -- NOT YOUR PERSONAL *PLAYROOM*!

SORRY, REGGIE. I WAS JUST TRYING TO KEEP IN *PRACTICE*. I THOUGHT YOU'D APPRECIATE--

--WHAT? MAKING MY SECRETARY THINK SHE'D TAKEN LEAVE OF HER SENSES? GIVING BABS THE WEEK OFF?

I GUESS I *DID* GET A LITTLE CARRIED AWAY...

WELL... JUST FORGET IT. I SHOULD BE USED TO IT BY NOW...

THANKS, REGGIE--

AND PUT THOSE *SILLY WEAPONS* AWAY!

HONESTLY! IF IT'S *FIREPOWER* YOU WANT, OUR *STANDARD ISSUES* ARE *INFINITELY* SUPERIOR!

GIVE UP OLD *MIKE* AND *IKE*? I *COULDN'T*! THEY'RE LIKE--

YES, YES, I *KNOW*-- "LIKE OLD FRIENDS!" WELL, KEEP THEM IF YOU *MUST*-- BUT I *DO* WISH YOU'D STOP REFERRING TO THEM BY *NAMES*!

LITTLE THINGS LIKE *THAT* MAKE ME *WORRY* ABOUT YOU, RICHARD.

4

NOW, PLEASE TRY TO PAY *ATTENTION*. YOU'VE A *JOB* TO DO...

GOOD. I COULD *USE* THE MONEY...THE *COSTUME SHOP* ISN'T AS *PROFITABLE* AS IT USED TO BE...

...BUT, GEE, REGGIE.., I HOPE THIS ONE ISN'T LIKE THE *LAST* JOB. THAT GOT A LITTLE TOO *MESSY* FOR MY--

IT'S *WORSE*, I'M AFRAID, RICHARD.

THIS ONE'S A *COP KILLER*.

NOW THIS IS ALL *STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL*... S.O.P. FOR YOU, I SUPPOSE, BUT I WANT TO *WARN* YOU...

THE CONTRACT COMES FROM *POLICE COMMISSIONER MARX* HIMSELF.

LIKE MANY OF OUR CLIENTS, MARX IS LOOKING FOR AN *EXPEDIENT* SOLUTION TO HIS PROBLEM...

...AND IN *THIS* CASE, I MUST *CONCUR* WITH HIM.

SCUM LIKE THIS KILLER DON'T *DESERVE* OUR LEGAL SYSTEM. THIS *INOCULATOR* FELLOW MUST BE HUNTED DOWN AND KILLED LIKE THE WILD ANIMAL HE IS.

IT WON'T BE EASY. HE SEEMS TO BE ALMOST *INVISIBLE*... WE HAVE JUST THE ONE PHOTOGRAPH OF HIM...

IT WAS TAKEN BY SURVEILLANCE CAMERAS AT THE REINHARDT INSTITUTE.

IT HASN'T BEEN RELEASED TO THE PRESS--THE INSTITUTE'S BEEN HAVING P.R. PROBLEMS LATELY--ANOTHER LOG ON THE FIRE IS THE *LAST* THING THEY NEED.

HOWEVER, ACCORDING TO THEIR INTERNAL SECURITY, THIS FELLOW SOMEHOW BROKE INTO THE INSTITUTE AND STOLE A VARIETY OF SERIO-INOCULATION DEVICES...

...THE VERY SAME DEVICES HE'S BEEN USING TO KILL HIS SELECTED VICTIMS.

MASS INJECTIONS ARE A SNAP! WITH VIRO-GONE™ INOCU-GUNS!!

AT FIRST, HE TARGETED ONLY THE *CRIMINAL ELEMENT*, SO THERE WAS LITTLE CONCERN... IN FACT, HE SEEMED TO BE BUILDING UP QUITE A PUBLIC FOLLOWING...

I IMAGINE HE MIGHT HAVE PARLAYED HIS REP INTO A NICE *POLITICAL* CAREER...UNTIL HE WENT *BAD*...

WE'RE STILL NOT CERTAIN *WHY* HE KILLED THOSE COPS...BUT HE DID.

THEY'RE DEAD, AND *HE'S* ON THE STREETS.

FIND HIM.

ELIMINATE HIM.

THE KILL PAYS TEN THOUSAND DOLLARS. WILL THAT BE SUFFICIENT?

SURE...BUT... IS THIS *ALL* YOU'VE GOT? I MEAN...FINDING *ONE* GUY IN *NEW YORK CITY* WON'T BE *EASY*--

WELL, HE *HAS* DYED HIS SKIN *GREEN*--NOT MANY GREEN MEN WANDERING THE STREETS, I'D VENTURE TO SAY...

PLUS THE FACT THAT HE WAS *INJURED* IN HIS SHOOTOUT WITH THE *POLICE* OUGHT TO SLOW HIM DOWN A BIT...

IF *THAT* ISN'T ENOUGH, THERE'S ALSO *THIS*...

A WEEK OR SO AFTER THE INOCULATOR BROKE INTO THE STOREROOM, ANOTHER MAN WAS TAPED EXAMINING THE CRIME SCENE.

WE'RE NOT CERTAIN *WHO* HE IS, BUT FROM HIS *ATTIRE* I'D GUESS HE WAS SOME KIND OF *PRIVATE INVESTIGATOR*, EH?

IF HE'S LOOKING FOR OUR TARGET TOO, HE PROBABLY HAS A GOOD *HEAD START* ON YOU... FIND HIM AND *PROD* HIM A BIT... HE COULD BE OF SOME *HELP*...

I DON'T KNOW ABOUT THIS, REGGIE... THIS ONE DOESN'T EXACTLY LOOK LIKE A *CAKE WALK*...

IF IT *WAS*, RICHARD, WE WOULDN'T HAVE HIRED *YOU*...

TAKE A MOMENT TO UNDERSTAND THE DELICATE *POLITICAL* NATURE OF THIS SITUATION.

THE *PUBLIC* DOESN'T KNOW ABOUT THE POLICE MURDERS YET--*THEY* STILL BELIEVE THE INOCULATOR'S FORAYS ARE RESTRICTED TO THE *UNDERWORLD*...

VIOLENT CRIME IS ON THE WANE EVER SINCE THE NEWS TABLOIDS BEGAN PROMOTING THE INOCULATOR AS THE *SHADOW'S* SUCCESSOR...

AND NO ONE WANTS A *REPEAT* OF THE *CRIME WAVE* THAT OVERWHELMED THIS TOWN AFTER THE SHADOW'S DEATH BECAME KNOWN...

THE COMMISSIONER WANTS THE INOCULATOR OUT OF THE PICTURE-- BUT THE PUBLIC MUST NEVER DISCOVER HE IS DEAD--

--*YOUR* JOB, RICHARD, IS TO *DO IT*--

"--BEFORE THE LITTLE *BUGGER* DOES ANY *MORE* DAMAGE..."

OH...GOD...

IT *HURTS*... IT *HURTS*..

GOT TO... *HIDE*... GET SOME *HELP*...

BUT... SO *TIRED*... CAN... HARDLY *STAND*...

THINK... I JUST... *REST*..

HERE...

A LITTLE... SLEEP... CAN'T HURT...

NO ONE... FIND ME... HERE...

THAT'S RIGHT, HONEY BUNCH... YER GOOD AN' SAFE HERE...

OOOH... YOU GOT A *BOO-BOO*... DON'T WORRY-- MAMA WILL FIXIT REAL GOOD...

GWEN? IS THAT *YOU*?

SURE IT IS, HONEY BUNCH... YOU HAD ME WORRIED *SICK*... BUT I KNEW YOU'D COME BACK...

YES... I COULDN'T *EVER* LEAVE *YOU*... I GUESS... I JUST... THOUGHT I WAS... DOING THE *RIGHT THING*... IS ALL...

SURE YOU DID, HONEY BUNCH.. BUT TWENTY YEARS *IS* A LONG TIME...

TWENTY--? BUT... GWEN... IT'S ONLY BEEN... A WEEK... MAYBE *TWO*...

...GWEN?

YOU CAN CALL ME *WHATEVER* YOU WANT, LOVER BOY... BUT ALL YOU *HAVE* TO DO IS *WHISTLE*--

--AND I'LL BE *HERE*...

NO--!!

WOOOOOOO!!!

HONEY BUNCH... DON'T... GO...

...AND WHEN HIS TIME CAME, THE SHADOW DIED... WITH NO APOLOGIES... AND NO REGRETS...

...I ONLY WISH HIS *AGENTS SHARED* THE MASTER'S ATTITUDE...

BUT THEY *INSIST* ON CONTINUING HIS WORK... AND FINDING THIS *INOCULATOR* FELLOW TO *LEAD* THEM...

...WHILE I AM CONTENT TO SIMPLY LIE HERE...AND *BASK* IN THE MASTER'S MEMORY...

EEEEYYYAAAHHHH!!!

WHAT?!

THAT *SOUND*-- A *CRY* OF *TERROR*--BUT *DOWN HERE* IN THE *SUBWAY?*

GOOD LORD! IT'S SOME KIND OF *MANIAC*-- AND HE'S COMING *THIS WAY*--

I'D BETTER--

--WAIT! DO MY *EYES* DECEIVE ME... OR IS THAT *TWITCHKOWITZ?*

TWITCH--?

DOC! DOC TAM!

THANK GOD! DOC-- YOU'VE GOT TO *HELP* ME!

THIS... *THING*-- I MEAN-- *WOMAN*-- SHE *ATTACKED ME*-- AND--

--*SHOT* YOU?

NO... SHE JUST--

--AND YOUR *SKIN*-- IT'S *GREEN!* DID YOU KNOW THAT?

YES... I... DID IT... MYSELF...

I SEE... AND YOUR *WOUND*...? I SUPPOSE YOU *SHOT* YOURSELF TOO--?

NO, I--

--I--

WHUMP

OH DEAR...

JUST LIE *STILL*, TWITCH... I'LL HAVE THE BULLET OUT IN A *MOMENT*...

THE *LOCAL ANESTHETIC* SHOULD LESSEN THE *PAIN*... ALTHOUGH I'M AFRAID THE *REST* OF THE PROCEDURE WILL BE RATHER... *IMPROVISED*...

NOW, WHERE DID THE *MASTER* PUT THOSE *PLIERS*... AH!

OH, GOD... I'VE MADE SUCH A *MESS* OF THINGS...

I JUST WANTED TO PAY MY DEBT TO THE MASTER AND *COMPLETE* THE JOB HE'D *STARTED*... GUESS I BECAME PRETTY OBSESSED WITH THE IDEA...

IT CAME TO ME IN THE *JOHN* ONE NIGHT... THE NAME... THE IMAGE... I'D BECOME THE *INOCULATOR*...

I *KNOW* IT SOUNDS *CRAZY*, BUT I--

YOU? *YOU'RE* THE INOCULATOR?

WHY, YES, DOC-- I FIGURED THE *GREEN SKIN* WAS A DEAD GIVEAWA--

--*OWWW!!!*

YOU, TWITCH... THE INOCULATOR! WHAT A *GRAND* JEST!

WAIT TILL THE *OTHERS* HEAR OF THIS!

YOU *CAN'T*... TELL THEM... *DOC!* I WON'T... DRAG THEM... INTO THIS!

I KILLED... SOME *COPS*, DOC... *CROOKED, JUNK-DEALING* COPS... BUT *COPS* NONETHELESS!

I'M NOT... JUST A RUN-OF-THE-MILL VIGILANTE... NOW, DOC... I'M A *MARKED MAN!*

I DON'T *WANT* TO BE THE INOCULATOR ANYMORE, DOC-- BUT I'VE GOT *NO CHOICE!* THOSE *COPS* ARE *KILLING KIDS*... MAKING A BUCK OFF THEIR *SUFFERING*...

THEY'RE THE *WORST* KIND OF SCUM THERE IS... BUT THEY'VE GOT THE *LAW* ON *THEIR SIDE!*

I'VE GOT TO GET BACK ON MY FEET AND *STOP THEM*... FOR MYSELF... FOR THE *MASTER*...

"...AND FOR ALL THOSE *INNOCENT* LITTLE *KIDS*..."
UH-OH...
MGGGPPPHH
AH! LOOK! A *WELCOMING* COMMITTEE!
THEY SEND THEIR *CHILDREN* TO *GREET US!*
A *QUAINT CUSTOM*, INDEED!
AND *LOOK!* A *TALKING DOLL!* PERHAPS IT IS INTENDED AS A *GIFT!*
CHILDREN! *GET DOWN!!*
GET FUNKY!
JUST *DO IT!*
MGGGPHH?
OH, REALLY! THIS IS *NOT* NECESSARY!
LISTEN, YOUNG ONES! IN *THIS* GREAT NATION, *NO* MAN NEED *EVER* BOW DOWN TO ANOTHER--
GUILTY! *GUILTY!* *GUILT*--
--WHAT THE *HELL?!*
--*REDS!* *INVADERS!*
UHH, COMRADE... ALTHOUGH I DO NOT UNDERSTAND THEIR *LANGUAGE*--
--I SENSE GREAT *HOSTILITY* HERE...DO YOU THINK--?
ABSOLUTELY...
--KILL 'EM!!!!
BANG
BUZZ
POW
KLANG
BANG
WHOOSH
VIP
VIP
RETURN FIRE!!
POW
BLAM
POW
ZZZZOOM
HONK
ZIP
BANG
WHEE
POW
YOW
WOW
NOW

ZING POW HONK WHOOSH BUZZ BNG

WHAT NOW, BROTHER?

NOW WE *SURRENDER*--

WHATTAYOU, CRAZY? *YOU* CAN'T EVEN *STAND UP* WITHOUT GETTIN' SHOT!

WELL, THEN, PERHAPS WE CAN *DEFECT*...

ZNG DNG WNG KNG BNG FN

REMEMBER THE *CHILDREN*! THEY ARE OUR RESPONSIBILITY, TOO! WE MUST SIMPLY *WAIT*... AND HOPE THE TWO OPPOSING FORCES WIPE EACH OTHER OUT...

FORGET *THAT*! THE PEOPLE OF MALICE ARE THE TOUGHEST, MEANEST, *LOWEST* FOLKS ON *EARTH*--

THERE'S *HUNDREDS* OF 'EM AGAINST FIVE LOUSY CHINESE TROOPS! THOSE REDS ARE ALREADY *DEAD*-- THEY JUST DON'T KNOW IT YET!

HUP HEY HOHUH WOW ZAP BURP

FACE IT-- BEFORE THE NIGHT IS OUT, YER GONNA BE *SINGIN'* TO THE *ARBITRATOR*!

WE APPRECIATE YOUR OPTIMISM, FRIEND.

HEY-- I CALLS 'EM AS I SEES 'EM, BUT THERE *IS* ONE ALTERNATIVE... *IF* YER WILLIN' TO MAKE A *DEAL*...

FLIPPITY FLOPPITY FLIPPITY HOPPITY

CONTINUE, PLEASE. THE IDEA OF REMAINING ALIVE APPEALS TO ME.

YOU CAME INTA TOWN WITH A *STIFF*... TILL SOME GUYS STOLE IT FROM YOU... NOW YOU WANT IT *BACK*...

TO *ME*, A STIFF'S A STIFF BUT EVERYONE WANTS *THIS ONE*, SO IT'S GOTTA BE WORTH *BIG BUCKS*...

WOKKA WOKKA WOKKA WOKKA WO

I'LL HELP YOU *GET* IT BACK, AND WHEN *YOU* SELL IT-- I GET A *PIECE* OF THE TAKE. THAT'S THE DEAL.

A *PIECE*?

THAT'S IT.

DEAL.

HEY HO WHAM BIFF LOUED

OKAY, THEN. HERE I GO.

HEY! DO NOT STAND *UP*! YOU'LL GET YOURSELF--

DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME-- I'M PINT-SIZED...

NICK LICK LICK BO BICK BANANA FANA ZOOM HOHOOO RAP

OKAY, YOU PUNKS... EMPTY YER POCKETS.

THAT'S RIGHT... *EVERYTHING*...

ZIP WOOWOOWOOWOOWa

LET'S SEE NOW...

AHH... HERE'S A GOOD ONE. M-100, LOOKS LIKE...

ALL'S I NEED IS A COUPLE MORE OF *THESE*, AND...

FAPWAPBAPBUDDABUDDAHEY

HEY, MISTER!

HOW 'BOUT *THIS ONE?*

A STICK OF *DYNAMITE!* GIVE IT HERE, MUTT!

BOOOOWOOGOOOFOOO

JUST TIE 'EM TOGETHER...

LIGHT THE FUSE...

BIPPITY BAPPITY CLIPPITY CLAP

GIVE IT A LITTLE STRATEGIC *TOSS...*

...AND...

BOOM!

BOOM!

RRRRRRRRRRRRRR

OKAY! WHO THREW THAT *DYNAMITE?*

WHOEVER THREW THAT DYNAMITE IS *GUILTY* OF--

RRRRRRRRRRRRRR

--THROWING DYNAMITE.

DISPERSE! DISPERSE! DIS--

CRUNSSSH

Y KNOW... LITTLE *PUNKS* SHOULDN'T PLAY WITH STUFF LIKE THAT.

GET YERSELVES KILLED.

YES, SIR...

REMARKABLE! THE TALKING *DOLL* SAVED OUR *LIVES!*

IT MUST BE AN *AMERICAN MODEL!* FIRST THEY TELL *BEDTIME STORIES*-- AND NOW *THIS!*

IF WE COULD ARRANGE A *PURCHASE*, WE WOULD BE *NATIONAL HEROES!*

BUT, HONG-- WITH OUR *MILITARY WAGES* WE HAVE *NO MONEY* TO BUY *ANYTHING*...

AH, BA DONG... WE HAVE SOMETHING FAR MORE *EXOTIC* THAN MONEY...

WE HAVE-- *HIM!*

TRADE THE BODY OF YING KO -- FOR A CHILD'S *TOY*?! Y-YOU *CANNOT*!

I *WILL*! WE CAN BRING IT BACK TO BEIJING WHERE OUR SCIENTISTS WILL DISASSEMBLE IT AND LEARN ITS *DESIGN*!

WITH THAT KNOWLEDGE, WE CAN PRODUCE THEM *FAR CHEAPER* THAN THE *AMERICANS*!

BEFORE LONG, *WE* WILL BE SELLING THE DOLLS TO *THEM*!

BUT WHAT OF THE *LEGENDS*? THEY SAY YING KO'S TERRIBLE VENGEANCE CAN STRIKE OUT FROM *BEYOND* THE GRAVE--

FORGET THE LEGENDS! IF THEY WERE *TRUE*, THEN THEY WOULD NOT BE *LEGENDS*, CORRECT?

I SUPPOSE... BUT--

NO BUTS! THERE WILL BE NO *VENGEANCE* FROM YING KO HE IS *DEAD*! NOW--LET'S MAKE A *DEAL*!

EXCUSE US, SIR... BUT WE WERE *WONDERING*...

WE ARE *SO* HAPPY TO SEE YOU! THAT *MOB*-- THEY WERE *INSANE*!!

YES! THEY KIDNAPPED OUR *FATHER*-- STOLE HIM FROM OUR *HOTEL ROOM*-- AND THEN THREATENED OUR VERY *LIVES*...

YES, YES... WE WILL GET TO *THAT*... BUT FIRST, PERHAPS YOU WOULD LIKE TO ARRANGE A *TRADE*--

TRADE? BUT--WE HAVE *NOTHING* TO TRADE--WE JUST WANT TO FIND OUR *FATHER* AND--

--*FATHER*???

CHANG! IT'S *FATHER*! COME *QUICKLY*!!

HE-HE'S *HERE*!

STILL DEAD, I SEE...

YES-- BUT IT'S *SO GOOD* TO SEE HIM!

AND YOU CAN *KEEP* HIM, COMRADES -- IN EXCHANGE FOR THE *FIGHTING DOLL*...

DOLL? WHAT DOLL?

THAT DOLL.

WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU GUYS *TALKIN' ABOUT*?

HEY! QUIT LOOKIN' AT ME THAT WAY!

DON'T YOU COME *ONE STEP CLOSER* OR I'LL--

MGGGPHHH!?

WHY, *CERTAINLY*... WE WILL TRADE... BUT I AM AFRAID HE IS IN *NEED* OF *REPAIR*... THE BATTLE SEEMS TO HAVE *RATTLED HIS CIRCUITS*...

NOT A PROBLEM. WE WILL REPAIR HIM IN OUR RESEARCH FACILITY.

JUST BE SURE TO HOLD HIS *MOUTH* -- IT *COULD* FALL OFF...

A FAVOR, GENTLEMEN. COULD YOU INCLUDE A FEW *RIFLES* AND *MAPS* IN THE EXCHANGE? WE HAVE FAR TO GO... AND THE MOUNTAINS CAN BE *DANGEROUS* TO --

A *PLEASURE*, COMRADE! WE WOULD NOT WANT YOU TO GET *LOST*... OR *VICTIMIZED!*

TAKE THESE -- WITH THE COMPLIMENTS OF THE *PEOPLES REPUBLIC!*

MANY THANKS

COME ALONG, CHILDREN...

FAREWELL, COMRADES...

MGGGPHHH

FAREWELL...

OUCH! THE DOLL *BITES*, *HONG* --!

YOU STUPID JERKS! PUT ME DOWN OR I'LL --

BLAMBLAMBLAMBLAM

POK

POK

POK

POK

POK

RRRMMGGGPHH

SONS OF BITCHES... TOOK MUH MONEY... STOLE MUH *KIDS*... KILLED THE *ARBITRATOR*...

I SAY *WE GET 'EM* AND *STRING 'EM UP!*

NO, NO, BLACKIE... LET US GATHER THE OTHERS AND *FOLLOW THEM*...

"...WHO *KNOWS* WHAT *WONDERS* THEY WILL LEAD US TO?"

...LISTEN, FELLAS--I *JUST* FLEW IN FROM THE *FROZEN WASTELANDS!* ME BOD'S STILL *ADJUSTIN'!* I...UH...COULD CATCH A *COLD* WALKING THROUGH HERE!

COULDN'T WE...UH... GO IN THE *BACK WAY?*

SORRY, MATE. ALL VISITORS GO THROUGH THE *MENAGERIE.* ORDERS.

WELL, I'VE HEARD ALL ABOUT HER *PETS* AND I--

GRUNNNKGDW

--WHAT WAS *THAT--?*

MUST BE *OTTO... ORNERY* CUSS...

NAHH... IT'S *FRITZ.* HE'S GOT A *BITCHIN'* COLD--

OTTO? FRITZ? THAT SOUNDED LIKE A BLOODY *MONSTER!* IT'S --

GRONK GRONK

GRONNNKKKK GRONNNKKK

GOOD *GOD--!*

GOT 'IM, SLIM?

DEAD IN MY SIGHTS, ZIGGY.

BLAM

SQUONNNK

GEEZ! YOU SHOT IT!

YUP.

BUT -- IT WAS ONE OF HER *PETS!* WHAT'S SHE GOING TO *SAY?!*

"DRAIN IT FOR MY *BATH*"... OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT...

URK...

THIS WAY...

...RIGHT THROUGH THE *MUSEUM*, WHERE SHE'S GOT SOME OF HER FAVORITE--

SMELLS MORE LIKE A *MORGUE* IN HERE... I--

CHARLES CHAPLIN

BUDDY HOLLY

ADOLPH HITLER

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

JIMMY HOFFA

LINDB BAB

--HEY! ISN'T THAT--?

--PROBABLY. SHE'S GOT *ALL* THE GREATS... A TO Z... IF THEY NEVER BEEN BURIED *PROPER*, CHANCES ARE *SHE'S* GOT 'EM STUFFED AN' STANDIN'...

... 'CEPT *THIS* ONE

THE SHADOW

NOW, COME ON:- WE'RE RUNNIN' *LATE*...

YOU HAVE AN *APPOINTMENT*, I PRESUME... MADAME IS CURRENTLY--

YEAH, WE GOT AN APPOINTMENT -- AND *MADAME'S* GOING TO BE *PISSED* IF SHE MISSES IT!

VERY WELL...

LET HER *DISCONTENT* BE ON *YOUR* HEADS...

SSSSSSS

DOCTOR... YOU *SHOULDN'T* HAVE... DONE THAT...

I WAS *SO CLOSE*... I SAW THE TUNNEL OF LIGHT... THEN, HIS *FACE*...

I-I ALMOST *TOUCHED HIM*...

INDEED, MADAME. WE SUCCEEDED IN BRINGING YOUR METABOLIC LEVELS TO A NEW *LOW*--MERE MICRONS AWAY FROM *FLATLINE* RESPONSE.

YOU WERE *ABOUT* TO PROCEED TO THE *NEXT STAGE*... BUT I WAS *FORCED* TO *INTERRUPT* YOUR *SOJOURN*...

WHAT?!

THERE'S A REASONABLE EXPLANATION FOR THIS, LUV...

WE *HAD* HIM, ODESSA... I *HAD* HIM RIGHT IN MY *HANDS!*

HIM? YOU MEAN... THE *SHADOW?!*

YEAH! BUT THEN THERE WERE THESE *CHINESE TROOPS*... THEY STARTED *FIRING* ON *US*... AND THEY GOT BILLY... AND DOLF... AND JAKE... AND...

WHERE IS HE?

WELL... THEY GOT *HIM*, TOO...

YOU *LET THEM--?*

I-I DIDN'T HAVE MUCH *CHOICE*, LUV... YOUR CHOPPER BOYS AIRLIFTED ME OUT BY THE SKIN O' ME *ARSE!*

THERE ARE *WORSE* WAYS TO *DIE*, HOGAN...

MORE *EXCRUCIATINGLY PAINFUL* WAYS...

BUT IT WASN'T A *TOTAL* WASHOUT! *HONEST!*

LOOK AT THIS!

HMMM...

OH, HOGAN... A SHADOW FINGER IT'S *LOVELY!* *JUST* WHAT I WANTED!

IT'LL MAKE THE *DRILL* TOUR A *SMASHING* SUCCESS!

I *THOUGHT* YOU'D LIKE IT, LUV...

TELL ME, HOGAN... HIS *BODY*... DID YOU... *TOUCH* IT...?

HAD IT SLUNG OVER ME SHOULDER FOR A COUPLE HOURS, LUV... YEP, YOU COULD SAY ME 'N' THE SHADOW BECAME PRETTY *CLOSE* FOR A WHILE THERE...

WHAT DID IT *FEEL* LIKE, HOGAN...? WAS IT--?

--COLD, M'LUV... VERY COLD...

YESSS... I THOUGHT SO.

I WANT HIS *BODY*, HOGAN. GO BACK AND GET IT FOR ME.

HH... THUK-- SHHH... THUK-- SHHH... TH

WELL, DOCTOR?

THE REINHARDT INSTITUTE

I *WARNED* HIM! I *STRESSED* THAT THE LAST OPERATION WOULD STRAIN HIS INTERNAL ORGANS!

BUT HE *INSISTED!*

AND AS YOU *BOTH* KNOW... WHEN *HE* INSISTS, HE *CANNOT* BE DENIED!

THAT'S *TRUE*, DOCTOR... BUT WE HAVE OUR *ORDERS*. IF *HE* DIES...

...YOU JOIN HIM *REAL QUICK.*

I'M *AWARE* OF *THAT*, YOU *MORON!* WHY *ELSE* WOULD I BE *HERE* INSTEAD OF IN *BED?!!!*

DOC... THE MONITORS... HE'S *FADING...*

LOOK, YOU TWO -- I *KNOW* THIS IS LIKE EXPLAINING GENETICS TO *CHIMPANZEES*, BUT *TRY* TO UNDERSTAND --

--WE'RE MOVING YOUR BOSS INTO THE OPERATION THEATRE TO UNDERGO EXPERIMENTAL *SURGERY*. I'VE CONTACTED AN *ASIAN* DOCTOR WHO HAS MASTERED CERTAIN *TECHNIQUES*...

WHERE HE *CAME FROM*.. WHAT HIS *CREDENTIALS* ARE, I DON'T *KNOW*. HE ARRIVED AT THE INSTITUTE SOME WEEKS AGO WITH AN *ARTIFICIALLY* PERFUSED *CANINE*...

..IN *OTHER WORDS*.. HE MANAGED TO ISOLATE AND SUSTAIN A *LIVING BREATHING* DOG *HEAD*...

OFFICIALLY, THE INSTITUTE WAS *REPELLED* BY HIS *INHUMAN* EXPERIMENTS... BUT *NOW* WE ARE *INTERESTED.*

IT'S OUR *LAST CHANCE*, GENTLEMEN...

NOW, LET'S *HURRY*, SHALL WE--?

--BEFORE WE LOSE *THAT*, TOO--

--OOOFFF!

TREESM

UGGG!

OOOHH... WHAT THE HELL WAS--

DICK? DICK *MAGNET*...? WHAT THE HELL ARE *YOU* DOIN' HERE?!

B-BESIDES SLAMMING MY SKULL... I-I-- DON'T SEEM TO *REMEMBER*...

MAGNET... DICK MAGNET... IS *THAT* MY NAME?

OH, *GREAT!* WHAT *IS IT* WITH YOU, MAGNET? YOU *WANT* MY ASS *UNEMPLOYED* OR *WHAT?*

I MEAN--I *THOUGHT* YOU GOT WHAT YOU CAME FOR *LAST TIME* YOU WERE HERE!

LISSEN, KIDDO...I GOT A *THUNDERING HEADACHE*... AND YOU'RE NOT *HELPING* ANY...

KIDDO...? HEY, WHAT'S GOT INTA YOU, MAGNET? HOW'D YOU GET IN HERE *ANYWAY?*

HEY--GIVE ME A *BREAK!* I CAN'T EVEN REMEMBER WHO I *AM*-- HOW'M I SUPPOSED TO REMEMBER HOW I GOT HERE?!

MAN... MUST'A BEEN THAT *WHACK* ON THE HEAD... YOU GOT *AMNESIA* OR SOMETHIN'!

OKAY, LOOK-- YOUR NAME'S *DICK MAGNET*... YOU'RE A P.I.... YOU GOT AN OFFICE OVER ON 42ND IN TIMES SQUARE...

...ANY OF THIS *RINGIN'* A *BELL?*

JUST *CHIMES* RIGHT NOW... BUT KEEP IT COMING, KIDDO...

"...THE PIECES ARE ALL STARTIN' TO FALL INTO PLACE..."

I'D BEEN ON THE CASE FOR THREE DAYS NOW AND COULDN'T RAISE A GHOST, LET ALONE THE GUY MY CLIENTS CALLED THE *INOCULATOR*.

A FEW LEADS HERE... A FEW THERE... A COUPLE STRANDS OF *DYED HAIR* FOUND AT SOME HIGH-TECH THINK TANK CALLED THE REINHARDT INSTITUTE... AND THEN... NOTHING.

A DEAD END.

I PONDERED MY HAIR AND THE FEW NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS OF THE INOCULATOR'S ANTI-CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES... THERE WAS NOTHING LEFT TO DO.

I NEEDED *HELP* ON THIS ONE... BUT MY SOMETIME-ASSISTANT- A YOUNG TURK NAMED *RUPERT TOME*-- WAS OFF ON A CASE OF HIS OWN.

I WAS FLYING SOLO... AND I'D JUST RUN OUT OF GAS.

I'D CALLED MY CLIENTS AND TOLD THEM TO STOP BY. IT WAS A SHORT ONE. I WAS GIVING UP.

I USUALLY *BURN* MY NOTES WHEN I CLOSE A CASE. THIS TIME I HAD NO NOTES TO BURN.

I LIT A CIGARETTE, INSTEAD... AND WAITED FOR--

KNOCK KNOCK

--THE KNOCK ON THE DOOR.

HOLD ON JUST A SECOND... BE RIGHT THERE...

CLIK

MISTER MAGNET--?

GUHH--!

YOU-- YOU'RE *ME!!*

AN AMAZING *SIMULATION*, ACTUALLY--

--BUT *THESE*, I *ASSURE* YOU--

--ARE *VERY REAL!*

WHU-WHU-WHUT DO YOU WANT--? I--

INFORMATION, MISTER MAGNET. I HAVE IT FROM RELIABLE SOURCES THAT YOU HAVE BEEN IN SEARCH OF A FELLOW WHO CALLS HIMSELF THE *INOCULATOR*.

I WANT TO KNOW WHAT *YOU* KNOW.

B-B-BUT THAT'S *CONFIDENTIAL*-- I CAN'T--

PLEASE, MISTER MAGNET. I MAKE A SIMPLE REQUEST AND YOU MAKE IT *EVER SO* COMPLEX.

PERHAPS WE NEED A *MEDIATOR* OR TWO. LET ME INTRODUCE YOU TO MY TWO *FRIENDS*. THIS IS *IKE*--

"I SEE MY OPENING--

--AND THIS IS--

"I TAKE IT."

WHAM

--MIKE.

NOW, *REALLY* DICK--MAY I CALL YOU DICK?

THAT WAS *TERRIBLY* IRRESPONSIBLE OF YOU! LOOK WHAT YOU'VE DONE TO MY *FACE*!

YOU KNOW, YOU *MIGHT* HAVE DISFIGURED ME FOR *LIFE*-- IF I COULDN'T DO--

--THIS!

EEEP!

THUD

HMM... NOT EXACTLY THE RESPONSE I *EXPECTED* FROM A "HARD-BOILED" PRIVATE EYE...

...BUT PERHAPS HE'S JUST A TAD *POACHED*...

AH, WELL...HE'S NOT ABOUT TO TELL ME ANYTHING JUST *NOW*, BUT HE *SOUNDED* LIKE HE WAS *EXPECTING* COMPANY...PERHAPS SOME OF HIS *STAFF*...

...SO I'D BETTER KEEP THE FACE...

...AND DRAG HIM OUT OF SIGHT...

PRIVATE INVESTIGATION

PRIVATE INVESTIGATION

WITH A LITTLE LUCK... I CAN ÷NGGH÷ SEARCH THE PLACE... BEFORE MY ÷NGGH÷ GUESTS ARRIVE...

SLAM

THAT'S THAT...NOW... LET'S SEE WHAT WE HAVE HERE...

A CLIP FILE... SOME STRANDS OF *GREEN HAIR*...

A TAPE RECORDING... OF...

CLIK

...THE REINHARDT INSTITUTE... AND THEN... NOTHING. A DEAD END...

DAMN.

I'M TELLING YOU, ELTON -- IF HE HASN'T COME UP WITH *SOMETHING* BY NOW, I'M NOT GIVING HIM A *RED CENT*!

COME ON, MAVIS -- HAVE SOME *PATIENCE*! IT CAN'T BE *EASY* TO FIND A GUY LIKE *HIM*!

NOT EASY? FOR GOD SAKES -- THE GUY'S *GREEN*! HOW MANY GREEN MEN DO *YOU* KNOW...?

MAGNET

PRIVATE INVESTIGATION

LISSEN, BABE -- SOMETIMES, WHEN I GET GOOD 'N' *TANKED*, YER *ALL* GREEN T'ME!

THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEANT, DeWITT -- SO SHUT UP AND EAT YOUR BURGER! POOR RUPERT GOT *SICK* FROM *HIS*... MAYBE *WE'LL* GET LUCKY...

LOOK -- LET'S GIVE THE GUY THE BENEFIT OF THE DOUBT, OKAY? HEAR WHAT HE HAS TO SAY -- MAYBE HE'S GOT *SOMETHING*--!

MAGNET

PRIVATE INVESTIGATION

KNOCK KNOCK

HI, COME ON IN!
HELLO, MAGNET...
HI, DICK.
HOW'S IT HANGIN', PALLY?
FINE...JUST FINE! I WAS JUST MAKING SOME COFFEE... CARE FOR SOME...?
MAGNET... ARE YOU OKAY?
NEVER BEEN *BETTER*, MY DEAR... WHY DO YOU *ASK*...?
NO REASON... YOU JUST SEEM SO... CHIPPER...
MUST BE BECAUSE YOU'VE GOT SOME INFORMATION FOR US ON THE INOCULATOR, RIGHT, DICK?
WELL, ACTUALLY... NO... I DON'T
I WAS...UHM... HOPING *YOU* COULD TELL *ME* WHAT *YOU* HAVE ON HIM SO FAR...
US?! YOU WANT TIPS FROM *US??* LET ME GET THIS STRAIGHT--*WE'RE* SUPPOSED TO FIND THE INOCULATOR *FOR* YOU--AND THEN *YOU* BILL US FOR YOUR *SERVICES?!*
LET ME TELL YOU SOMETHING, *BUSTER*-- FOR WHAT YOU'RE CHARGING US, I WOULDN'T TELL YOU WHAT I *DO* KNOW ABOUT THIS GUY!
IF WE FIND HIM YOU *LOSE* OUR RETAINER! YOU WANT THAT MONEY-- FIND HIM *YOUR-SELF!*
PLEASE, MA'AM-- NO NEED TO GET SO--
AND WHAT'S WITH THIS "*MA'AM*" CRAP? IF YOU'RE TRYING TO *BUTTER ME*--
MAGNET
RRRR

MAVIS! THANK GOODNESS I FOUND YOU! I HAVE HAD LORELEI SEARCHING ACROSS THE CITY FOR YOU!

LISTEN CAREFULLY TO ME THERE IS LITTLE TIME.

I HAVE FOUND *TWITCH.*

HE IS *SLEEPING* NOW. I AM NOT CERTAIN FOR HOW MUCH *LONGER.*

AS SOON AS HE IS AWAKE HE IS DETERMINED TO RETURN TO THE STREETS.

MAVIS, I HAVE DIRE NEWS. TWITCH IS THE INOCULATOR.

HELLO?

HELLO?

MAVIS-- WHAT--

LOOKS LIKE SHE SEEN A *GHOST*... OR SOMETHIN' *WORST*...

TWITCH... HE'S... IN THE OLD H.Q... HE--

--HE'S THE INOCULATOR...

HERE WE GO... COFFEE FOR EVERYONE...

NOTHING LIKE A NICE, HOT CUP OF COFFEE TO DISCUSS ONE'S DIFFERENCES... GET THEM OUT IN THE OPEN AND--

HEY!!

HEY!!

OH, THIS IS UNBELIEVABLE! HE FOLLOWED US *ALL* THE WAY HERE!

THE GUY JUST WON'T *QUIT!*

WAIT UP!!!

HUHH... HUHH... YOU...GUYS ARE... PRETTY... *FAST...*

WHAT'S... THE BIG... HURRY...?

LET'S JUST GET THIS *STRAIGHT*, MAGNET. AS OF *NOW*, YOU'RE *OFF* THE PAYROLL.

YOU'RE NOT GOING TO SNOOKER A FEE OUT OF US ON THIS ONE! AGREED?

SURE... WHATEVER YOU SAY...

OKAY, THEN. COME ALONG IF YOU WANT...

CREEEE

BUT THERE'S NO *DEEP DARK* SECRETS IN HERE...

...JUST *OLD FRIENDS...*

DOC! YOU *TOLD!* BUT YOU *PROMISED--*

I AM SORRY, TWITCHKOWITZ... BUT THAT WAS ONE PROMISE I COULD NOT KEEP.

YOUR *WELFARE* IS FAR MORE IMPORTANT TO US ALL...

HEY, LITTLE BUDDY... WHAT THE HELL DID Y'DO TO YERSELF...?

IT WAS A CRAZY IDEA... I WANTED TO... DO WHAT WE *ALL* WANT TO DO... I GUESS...

BUT NOW... IT'S ALL GONE *BAD*... I'M IN *REAL TROUBLE*...

LOOK, TWITCH-- WE WERE ALL LOOKING FOR THE INOCULATOR-- AND WE NEVER KNEW *YOU* WERE HIM!

WE LIKED HIS *STYLE*... AND WE WANTED *HIM* TO LEAD US.

GUESS THE FACT THAT *YOU'RE* HIM KIND OF CHANGES THINGS--

--BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN WE WON'T GET YOU OUT OF A *JAM!*

WE'VE GOT TO STICK TOGETHER-- COME TO EACH OTHER FOR *HELP*--

--THAT'S WHAT FRIENDS ARE *FOR!*

YOU'RE RIGHT, I SUPPOSE -SNFF- AND I... REALLY APPRECIATE YOUR CONCERN...

BUT... WHAT'S *HIS* STORY...?

WHO-- MAGNET? HAVEN'T YOU TWO *MET*--?

Y-YEAH... BUT THAT'S *NOT* DICK MAGNET--

OF *COURSE* IT--

--ISN'T...

I THOUGHT THIS MIGHT BE A *CLEAN KILL*... BUT I'M AFRAID I WAS *WRONG*.

I'M SORRY-- YOU'RE ALL REALLY VERY *NICE* PEOPLE...

...BUT I HAVE MY *ORDERS*...

NEXT: DEATH IN HIGH PLACES



#18

cover art by KYLE BAKER

UGNN...MY STOMACH'S *KILLING* ME... BUT I CAN'T THINK ABOUT IT-- NOT WHEN WHAT'S LEFT OF MY *CAREER* IS ON THE LINE!

THE SHADOW'S AGENTS SAID THEY WERE HEADED HERE TO SEE HOW MISTER MAGNET'S SEARCH FOR THE *INOCULATOR* WAS GOING...

MAGNET *ALWAYS* GETS HIS MAN... AND IF I'M THERE WHEN HE FINDS HIM, I MIGHT BE ABLE TO FILE THE *STORY!*

I JUST HOPE THEY HAVEN'T ALREADY--

PRIVATE INVESTIGATION

--LEFT...?

HELLO? MISTER MAGNET?

YOOO HOOO? ANYBODY HOME?

MAGNET

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COME IN-- THE DOOR'S OPE--

OH

MISTER MAGNET--?

WHUD

GOOD TO SEE YOU, KID-- I'D OFFER YOU A *DRINK*, BUT I'VE GOT TO GET *GOING*.

PROBLEM IS, I DON'T KNOW WHERE I'M *GOING TO*.

WHAT HAPPENED? WHO LOCKED YOU IN--

HATE TO ADMIT IT, KID-- BUT HE GOT THE DROP ON ME. NEVER SAW ANYTHING LIKE IT-- HE COULD'VE BEEN MY *TWIN*. LOOKED JUST LIKE ME.

WHEN HE PULLED A ROD, I PUNCHED HIS *KISSER*-- BUT HIS FACE... IT WAS LIKE *SILLY PUTTY*.

THEN HIS FACE *CHANGED*... INTO SOME KIND OF *MONSTER*. I PUT UP A *FIGHT*... BUT HE WAS TOO STRONG. HE LOCKED ME UP.

I HEARD THE AGENTS ARRIVE I'D BEEN EXPECTING THEM. BUT I KNEW IF I CALLED OUT, HE'D START SHOOTING.

THERE WAS A PHONE CALL-- I THINK IT WAS TAM... AND THEY ALL RAN OFF.

DOCTOR *TAM*? WHY-- I JUST LEFT HIM AT THE SHADOW'S OLD H.Q.! I BET HE'S STILL THERE *NOW*!

THEN THAT'S WHERE WE'RE HEADED, KID--

"--BEFORE HE GETS THE DROP ON *THEM, TOO...*"

WE'VE GOT TO *STICK TOGETHER*, TWITCH--COME TO EACH OTHER FOR *HELP*--

--THAT'S WHAT FRIENDS ARE *FOR!*

YOU'RE RIGHT, I SUPPOSE -*SNIFF*- AND I... REALLY APPRECIATE YOUR CONCERN...

BUT... WHAT'S *HIS* STORY...?

WHO--MAGNET? HAVEN'T YOU TWO MET--?

Y-YEAH... BUT THAT'S *NOT DICK MAGNET...*

OF *COURSE* IT--

-- ISN'T...

I'D THOUGHT THIS MIGHT BE A *CLEAN KILL*... BUT I'M AFRAID I WAS *WRONG.*

HURRY IT *UP!* HE'S *IN* THERE-- AND IT *SOUNDS BAD*--LIKE HE'S GONNA--

I'M SORRY... YOU'RE ALL REALLY VERY *NICE* PEOPLE...

...BUT I HAVE MY *ORDERS...*

A MOMENT, SIR... HAVE WE NOT *MET BEFORE...?*

SOUNDS *CLOSER*... LIKE HE'S JUST ON THE *OTHER SIDE...*

THEY'RE TRYING TO *STALL* HIM... BUT HE'S *MERCILESS*... IF WE'RE GOING TO MAKE OUR *MOVE,* KID... IT'S GOT TO BE--

SWAMP

OOOF!

WHO THE--?

IT'S *MAGNET!* THE *REAL ONE!*

THIS IS *IT*--LET'S *MOVE*, AGENTS!

MOVE? I WANNA SMASH THAT CREEP'S *SKULL!*

HMMM... I AM *CERTAIN* I KNOW THAT FACE...

BODY AND SOUL, PART FIVE

HEAD SWAP

A LABOR OF LOVE BY
ANDREW HELFER / WRITER KYLE BAKER / ARTIST
(THE TWO MOST HATED MEN IN COMICS)

AND
BOB LAPPAN / LETTERS TOM ZIUKO / COLORS RENEE WITTERSTAETTER / ASSISTANT EDITS MIKE CARLIN / EDITS
(GUILTY BY ASSOCIATION)

THANKS FOR THE OPENING, MAGNET--NOW STAY OUT OF THIS--

--HE'S *MINE!*

KWAK

DUNNO HOW YOU MADE YERSELF LOOK LIKE OUR PAL, *DICK*--

--BUT WE'RE GONNA REARRANGE YER PUSS *PERMANENT-LIKE!*

POW

ARE YOU QUITE FINISHED?

GEEZ-- LOOKIT HIS *FACE*... AN' HE AIN'T EVEN *HURTIN'!*

YOU'RE NOT JUST MESSING WITH STREET HOODS HERE, PAL--

--WE'RE *PROFESSION*--

--HUH? WHERE'D HE--

ELTON! STOP HIM BEFORE HE--

LOOKIT HIS *FACE*--IT'S *SNAPPIN' BACK!*

THIS *INTERLUDE* IS *OVER*, MY ADVERSARIES-- AND I'M AFRAID MY ORDERS *STILL STAND*...

...THOUGH AT THIS POINT I BELIEVE I'LL ALMOST *ENJOY* EXECUTING THEM...

THINK TWICE, PAL. START SHOOTING AND YOU MIGHT GET *ONE* OF US, BUT I'LL MAKE SURE YOU'RE THE *SECOND* TO DIE.

HMMM... UNLESS I SHOOT *YOU* FIRST, EH?

UH... YEAH. I GUESS.

WELL, THEN... IT SEEMS MY DECISION IS *CLEAR*...

WAIT!!

I KNEW I REMEMBERED YOU FROM SOMEWHERE! IT WAS THE DISTANT PAST, YES--

BUT I NEVER FORGET A FACE!

YOU ARE RICHARD BENSON-- THE AVENGER!

I'M FLATTERED-- BUT THAT HARDLY CHANGES ANYTHING.

MY TRUE FACE WAS PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE-- YOU'RE JUST THE ONLY ONE OLD ENOUGH TO REMEMBER IT!

CERTAINLY I REMEMBER THE FILMS...BUT OUR RELATIONSHIP EXTENDED FAR BEYOND THE SILVER SCREEN.

YOU ONCE FOUGHT THE ONE KNOWN AS SHIWAN KHAN SIDE-BY-SIDE WITH THE MASTER!

MASTER...? YOU MEAN... THE SHADOW?

PRECISELY! AND WE-- WE ARE HIS AGENTS!

BUT-- THE SHADOW IS DEAD!

SADLY, THAT IS TRUE. BUT WE HAVE NOT YET GIVEN UP HOPE THAT WE MAY CONTINUE HIS WORK.

HMMM... I DON'T KNOW ABOUT THIS...

YOU NEED FURTHER PROOF? THEN LOOK AROUND YOU -- THIS PLACE WAS ONCE HIS HEADQUARTERS! IT IS FILLED WITH HIS POSSESSIONS, HIS MEMORIES-

SURELY, YOU MUST BELIEVE US!

WELL, LET'S SAY I DO FOR A MOMENT. NOW, I NEVER PARTICULARLY LIKED THE SHADOW'S WAY OF DOING THINGS--

--TOO ROUGH AND TUMBLE FOR MY TASTES--

BUT I KNEW THE MAN'S MODUS OPERANDI WELL ENOUGH TO KNOW HE'D NEVER HARBOR A CRIMINAL--

--LET ALONE A COP KILLER!

OH GOD...

NEWS! COPS KILLED!

YOU MEAN-- TWITCH KILLED *THESE GUYS?*

I DUNNO... THE PAPERS DON'T SAY NOTHIN' 'BOUT THE INOCULATOR BEIN' INVOLVED.

JUST SAYS TWO COPS GOT KILLED WHILE INVESTIGATIN' A DISTOIBANCE IN TIMES SQUARE...

TWITCH-- SAY IT ISN'T SO!

IT *IS* SO, ELTON-- BUT IT'S NOT WHAT YOU'RE THINKING.

THE INOCULATOR *DID* KILL THOSE COPS-- BUT THEY WERE DRUG-DEALING *MURDERERS!*

THEY WERE SHAKING DOWN THIS POOR JUNKIE-- BEAT HIM HALF TO DEATH...

I OVERHEARD THEM TALKING-- ABOUT THE *OTHER* COPS IN ON THE DEAL.. IT SOUNDED SO *BIG*...SO *AWFUL*... LIKE A *CANCER*... A *DISEASE*...

HONESTLY, MISTER BENSON-- THE INOCULATOR WAS BORN TO *WIPE OUT* EVIL-- NOT PERPETUATE IT!

BUT-- I'D RECEIVED EXPLICIT ORDERS-- HANDED DOWN FROM POLICE COMMISSIONER MARX HIMSELF...

KILL THE INOCULATOR-- LET NO ONE LEARN OF HIS DEMISE. MARX SAID IT WOULD BE BETTER IF THE CRIMINAL ELEMENT THOUGHT HE WAS STILL ALIVE...

BUT THERE'S *ANOTHER* WAY TO LOOK AT IT-- IF THE INOCULATOR VANISHED, THEN THE THINGS HE'D DISCOVERED WOULD VANISH WITH HIM!

SUPPOSE MARX *HIMSELF* WAS BEHIND ALL THIS...?

NOW LISTEN, YOUNG LADY-- I'VE HEARD MORE THAN MY FAIR SHARE OF CONSPIRACY THEORIES AND I'M NOT INTERESTED IN YET *ANOTHER*--

--BUT YOU CAN'T BE *CERTAIN*, CAN YOU, MISTER BENSON? IF YOU'RE *WRONG* AND TWITCH WAS TELLING THE *TRUTH*, YOU WON'T BE AN *AVENGER*...

...YOU'LL BE A *MURDERER.*

SIGH YOU'VE GOT A POINT THERE, YOUNG LADY.

IT GOES AGAINST MY BEST INSTINCTS... BUT I'LL RESERVE JUDGMENT FOR THE MOMENT... TILL I CAN SEPARATE THE *MURDERERS*...

"...FROM THE *VICTIMS*..."

QUIT *BLUBBERING*, MILDRED. YOU'RE MAKING A *SPECTACLE* OF YOURSELF!

IT'S BAD ENOUGH YOU CAME IN YOUR *PARTY OUTFIT*-- TRY NOT TO MAKE *EVERYONE* NOTICE IT!

HE-HE WAS MY *HUSBAND*, DAMN IT! WHY *SHOULDN'T* I MOURN HIM?

WHY? BECAUSE YOU'VE BEEN MAKING IT WITH *ME* FOR TEN YEARS NOW! HOW'S *THAT* FOR A REASON?

I-I DON'T THINK *THAT'S* RELEVANT--!

LOOK, MILLIE-- JACK WAS A *NICE* GUY--WE STARTED ON THE FORCE TOGETHER! BUT HE *KNEW* THE RISKS WHEN HE JOINED OUR LITTLE *PENSION OPERATION*--

I-I'VE BEEN MEANING TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT THAT, J.M.--

DON'T WORRY-- JACK LOVED YOU TILL THE END, POOR *SAP*... HE TOOK *GOOD* CARE OF YOU...

HOW GOOD, J.M.?

HOW--?

UMMM... AROUND FIFTY THOU A YEAR-- BUT NOW'S NOT THE TIME FOR THIS, MILLIE--THE *PRESS* ARE WAITING. THEY--

IT'S NOT ENOUGH, J.M. I GET A HUNDRED-- OR I SPILL MY GUTS TO THE *PAPERS*--

MILLIE--! I'M *SHOCKED*! YOU--YOU'RE *BLACKMAILING* ME! AFTER ALL WE'VE *SHARED*--!

CUT THE CRAP, J.M. I'VE GOT A LIFESTYLE TO WORRY ABOUT. DO WE HAVE A *DEAL*?

CERTAINLY, MY DEAR. IT'S A *PLEASURE* TO HONOR THE WISHES OF A DEAD COP'S WIFE...

GOOD. NOW COME ON-- THE PRESS IS WAITING. OH-- ONE LAST THING.

I-SNIFF-DON'T THINK WE SHOULD *SEE* EACH OTHER AFTER THIS... AFTER ALL... I'M IN *MOURNING*...

BITCH...

TROUBLE, UNC...?

JUST A *LITTLE*... BUT THAT'S WHY I HAVE *YOU*, WALLACE.

I WANT THAT WOMAN *DEAD* BY TONIGHT, WALLY-- MAKE IT A *SUICIDE*. STICK HER HEAD IN AN OVEN...HANG HER FROM A CHANDELIER... I DON'T CARE. JUST DO IT.

AND WHEN YOU'RE FINISHED, TAKE A FEW OF THE BOYS TO THE DROP ON 125TH STREET.

COUNT THE CASH--IF THE DELIVERY BOY'S A CENT SHORT, BASH HIS SKULL IN... I'VE HAD IT WITH THOSE UPTOWN PIKERS.

GOT IT, UNC.

RIGHT. NOW GET TO WORK. I'VE GOT TO SAY A FEW WORDS TO OUR FRIENDS IN THE PRESS POOL...

THAT'S ENOUGH FOR NOW, GENTLEMEN-- I THINK THE GRIEVING WIDOW HAS HAD ENOUGH FOR ONE DAY.

HOWEVER, I'VE A GENERAL STATEMENT TO MAKE.

I TELL YOU, MAX-- SOMETHING *STINKS* ABOUT THIS...

JUST LOOK AT THE GRIEVING WIDOW'S OUTFIT--NEVER MET A BEAT COP WHO COULD AFFORD TO BUY HIS MISSUS A FUR LIKE *THAT*!

YES SIR...

SORRY, OFFICER--

OOPS.

BONK

OUTTA MY WAY, JERK--

"WHO THE HELL WAS *THAT*, SIR--?"

"WALLY AMBERS, MAX--MARX'S LAP DOG... AND NEPHEW.

"STAY OUT OF HIS WAY, SON--

"--THE FELLA HASN'T GOT HIS HEAD SCREWED ON RIGHT..."

I DON'T KNOW ABOUT THIS DOC-- THIS OPERATION... IT JUST AIN'T *NATURAL*.

BUT DON'T YOU *SEE*? IT'S PRECISELY WHAT HE *WANTED* IN THE FIRST PLACE!

WELL... WHAT ABOUT THE CHOP DOC...? YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW WHERE HIM OR HIS PALS COME FROM--

IT DOESN'T MATTER! HE'S GOTTEN RESULTS-- *THEY'RE* THE ONLY THINGS THAT COUNT!

SOUNDS LIKE *VOODOO* TO ME...

...OR SOMETHING OUT OF A *FRANKENSTEIN* FLICK...

WHAT'S HE PLANNIN' T'DO, ANYWAY, DOC...?

IT'S FAIRLY SIMPLE-- IN CONCEPT. IF NOT IN EXECUTION... FIRST, HE'LL PERFUSE THE HEAD-- IF SUCCESSFUL, HE'LL ATTEMPT A PROSTHETIC SUBSTITUTION...

TRY IT IN *ENGLISH*, DOC-- I STILL DON'T GET--

GENTLEMEN... I'M READY TO MAKE THE INCISION NOW...

YOU'LL NOTICE THE JUGULAR RIGHT HERE... I'M AFRAID THAT WHEN WE CUT IT, THERE *WILL* BE A BIT OF BLOOD... SO IF YOU'RE THE LEAST BIT *SQUEAMISH*...

WELL, FAIR WARNING... HERE WE GO...

JESUS! HE-HE'S CUTTIN' THE BOSS'S *THROAT!*

HE'S *KILLIN'* HIM!

ARE YOU BOTH *TOTAL* MORONS? I THOUGHT I *EXPLAINED* ALL--

SUNOVABITCH-- GET YER HANDS OFF *HIM!!*

BLAM BLAM BLAM BLAM

OH DEAR..

sprankle

kaching kaching

EH?

JOHN. PAUL.

MAKE THEM -- STOP THAT.

YES, SIR.

JUST *TRY IT*, YOU TWO SACKS OF MURDERING--

SHHOOOF!

UUGNNNFF!

PLEASE, THIS IS ALL MY FAULT-- I'M AFRAID I DIDN'T EXPLAIN SUFFICIENTLY... AND THEY'RE BOTH A BIT *IMPULSIVE*...

THEY ARE VERMIN. IN ANOTHER TIME AND PLACE, THEY WOULD BE *DEAD*... BY OUR HANDS

OLD HABITS ARE HARD TO BREAK, BROTHER. BUT WE MADE OUR CHOICE...

THAT'S *CORRECT*, GENTLEMEN-- SO IF YOU PLEASE--?

WHILE YOU TWO HAVE BEEN... AHH... *SEDATING* OUR OBSERVERS, *I'VE* BEEN BUSY WITH THE PATIENT.

I'LL BE NEEDING THE *PERFUSER* NOW, IF YOU DON'T MIND...

SO YOU SEE, DOCTOR, ONCE WE CONNECT THE HEAD TO THE APPARATUS, OXYGENATED BLOOD WILL BE CIRCULATED AT A STEADY RATE... IT COULD SURVIVE INDEFINITELY IN SUCH A MANNER...

I'VE NO IDEA WHAT THE SENSE OF LITERAL DISEMBODIMENT MUST BE LIKE... BUT I'D GUESS IT WOULD BE MADDENING, TO SAY THE LEAST.

NEEDLESS TO SAY, THE PATIENT WILL REMAIN UNCONSCIOUS THROUGHOUT THE SECOND PART OF THE OPERATION-- THE PROSTHETIC IMPLEMENTATION--

BUT I MUST ADMIT A CERTAIN PERVERSE *CURIOSITY*...

I MEAN... I'D GIVE *ANYTHING* TO SEE THE LOOK ON HIS FACE IF HE...

...AHEM...

BROTHER-- SHOULD WE NOT *COVER HIM UP...?*

WITH *WHAT?* NONE OF US *DARE* GIVE UP EVEN *ONE LAYER* OF PROTECTION AGAINST THE ELEMENTS...

WERE HE NOT OUR *FATHER*, I WOULD HAVE TAKEN *HIS* GARMENTS LONG AGO...

BROTHER!

WELL, *HE* HARDLY NEEDS THEM...

...AND *BESIDES*-- HE LOOKS SO *PEACEFUL...*

YES, MUCH MORE SO THAN IN *LIFE.*

I HOPE THE ELDERS OF SHAMBALA WILL LET US TAKE A PHOTO BEFORE HE IS CREMATED... AS A REMINDER OF HIS LAST DAYS...

IRON MAIDEN

...IF THEY DO NOT FIRST *BANISH US* FOR ARRIVING WITH A GROUP OF *JUVENILE DELINQUENTS* IN TOW.

NONSENSE, BROTHER. THEY ARE *GOOD* CHILDREN. *ALL* CHILDREN ARE GOOD. THE PEOPLE OF SHAMBALA WILL FIND THEIR PRESENCE... *REFRESHING.*

PERHAPS... *IF* WE EVER *FIND* OUR HOMELAND.

NOT TO WORRY, BROTHER. THE MAPS THE CHINESE SOLDIERS *GAVE* US ARE ACCURATE -- TO A POINT.

YOU SEE THIS UNCHARTED REGION? THIS AREA CONSIDERED TOO DESOLATE, TOO HARSH TO EXPLORE?

YES.

WELL, THAT IS WHERE SHAMBALA IS...

...AND *THAT* IS WHERE WE ARE HEADED...

WHUP WHUP WHUP WHUP

PICKING UP A BLIP ON INFRARED, JOE --

--CORRECTION-- GOT ABOUT A *DOZEN* OF 'EM...

THAT'S GOTTA BE *THEM*... NO ONE ELSE *CRAZY* ENOUGH TO BE WANDERING THROUGH THIS WASTELAND...

WHUP WHUP WHUP WHUP WHUP WE

I COPY YOU, BIFF-- AND LET'S GET THIS *STRAIGHT:* WE GET IN THERE, FRAG 'EM ALL, AND BRING THE BODY HOME TO HER HIGHNESS.

YEAH-- NO PRISONERS ON THIS ONE-- ANY OF THOSE SOLDIERS LIVE TO TELL THE TALE, IT COULD MEAN *SERIOUS* DIPLOMATIC HASSLES FOR HER HIGHNESS'S *ASIAN TOUR...*

JP WHUP WHUP WHUP WHU

ROGER, JOE. WE'LL TAKE 'EM OUT QUICK AND PAINLESS.

ALL RIGHT, MATES-- JUST KEEP YER PEEPERS *WIDE*-- THEY SHOULD BE COMING UP, JUST OVER THAT *RIDGE...*

BROTHER... CHILDREN... DO YOU HEAR SOMETHING?

YES... A PECULIAR UNDULATING SOUND... PERHAPS A *STORM...* OR THE MATING CALL OF THE *SNOW CRANE...?*

WHAT THE HECK'S WRONG WITH YOU GUYS--?!

WHUP WHUP WHUP WHUP WHUP WHUP

AIN'T YOU NEVER HEARD A *HUEY* BEF--

IP WHUP WHUP

FIRE ONE AND TWO.

HATE

WHUP WHUP WHUP WHUP WHUP WHUP WH

SCATTER! SCATTER!

BWOOOSHHHH KA BOOM

WHUP WHUP WHUP

HEY, JOEY-- GOT A *VISUAL CONFIRM* ON THIS BUNCH... BUT THEY *AIN'T SOLDIERS--*

--THEY'RE *KIDS!*

MAYBE WE SHOULD CONSIDER A CHANGE OF PLANS HERE...?

WHAAAT??

WHUP WHUP WHU

NO FREAKIN' WAY! HER ORDERS *STAND!* WIPE 'EM ALL OUT!

BUT-- THEY'RE HER *TARGET AUDIENCE!!*

THEY'RE *OUR* TARGETS RIGHT NOW, BIFF, AND I MEAN TO *HIT* 'EM!

WHUP WHUP WHUP WHUP WHUP WHUP U

GOT THE BODY IN MY SIGHTS NOW! SOON AS I BLOW AWAY THAT LITTLE BUGGER, I'M GOING DOWN FOR THE PICK-UP--

NOW, JOE, NOW! KILL 'IM! KILL 'IM! POP HIM IN HIS FUZZY LITTLE--

HUP WHUP WHUP WH

BLAM

POK POK

GOOD SHOT, BROTHER!

YES, I BELIEVE IT WAS...

WHUP

WHUP

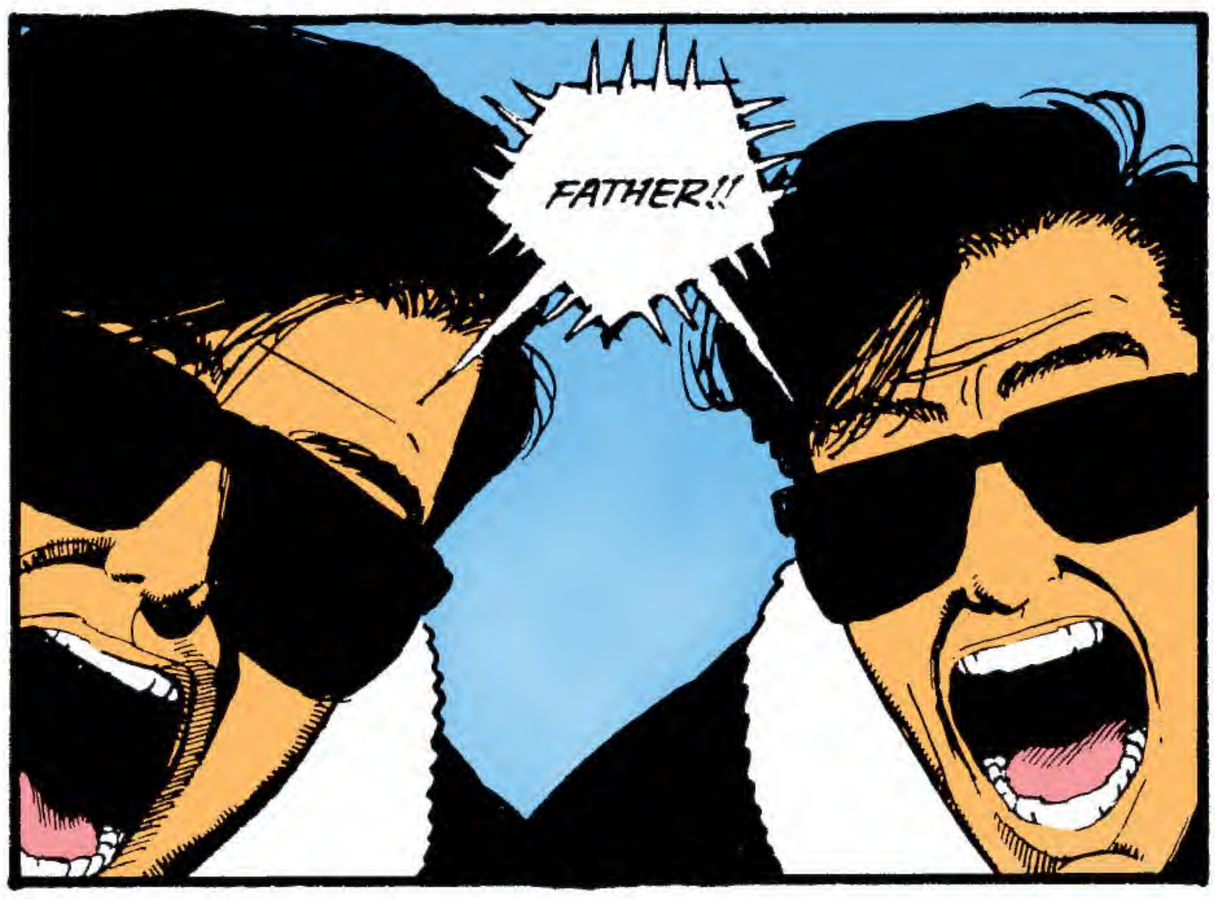
WHUP

WHUP

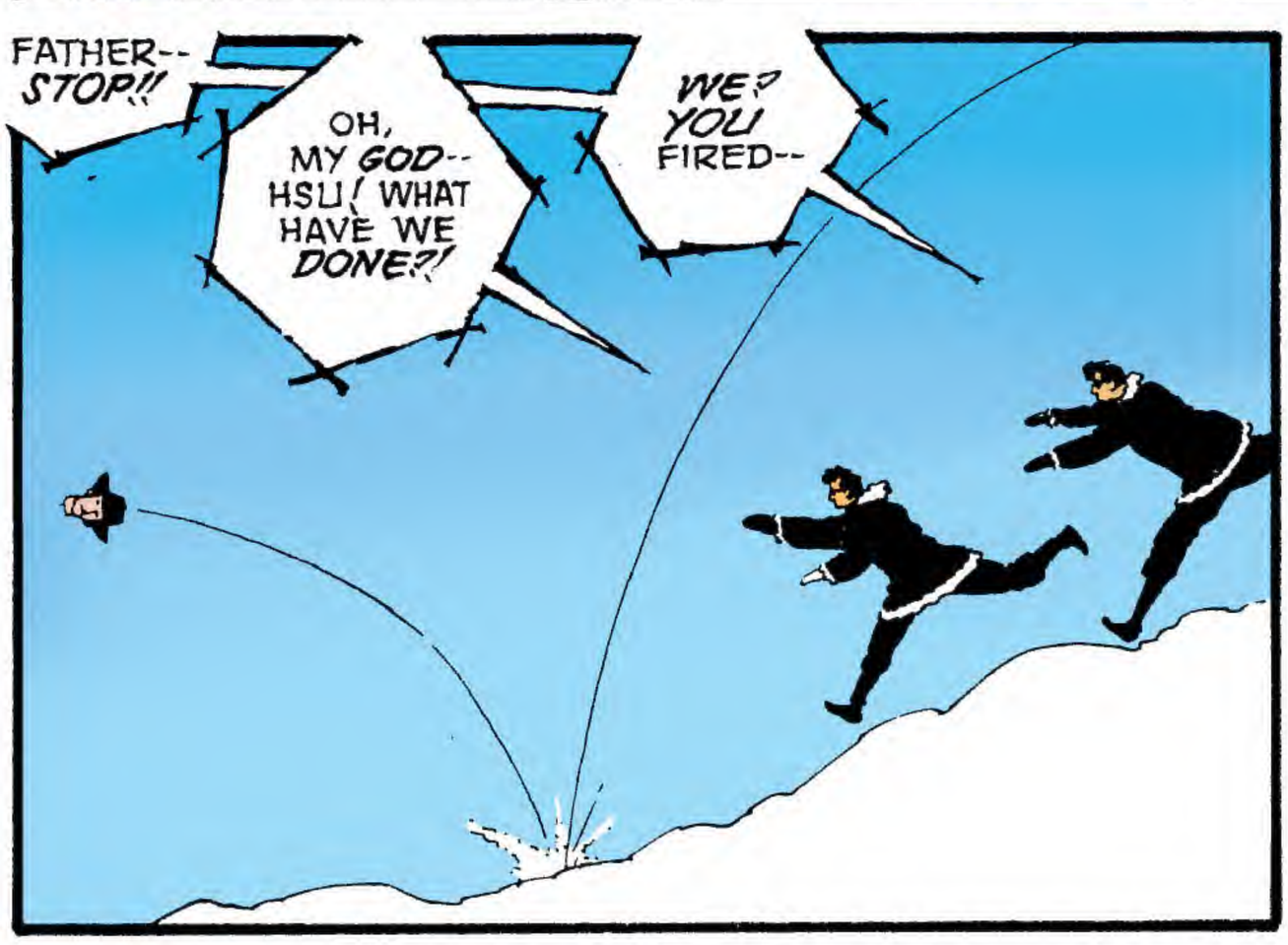
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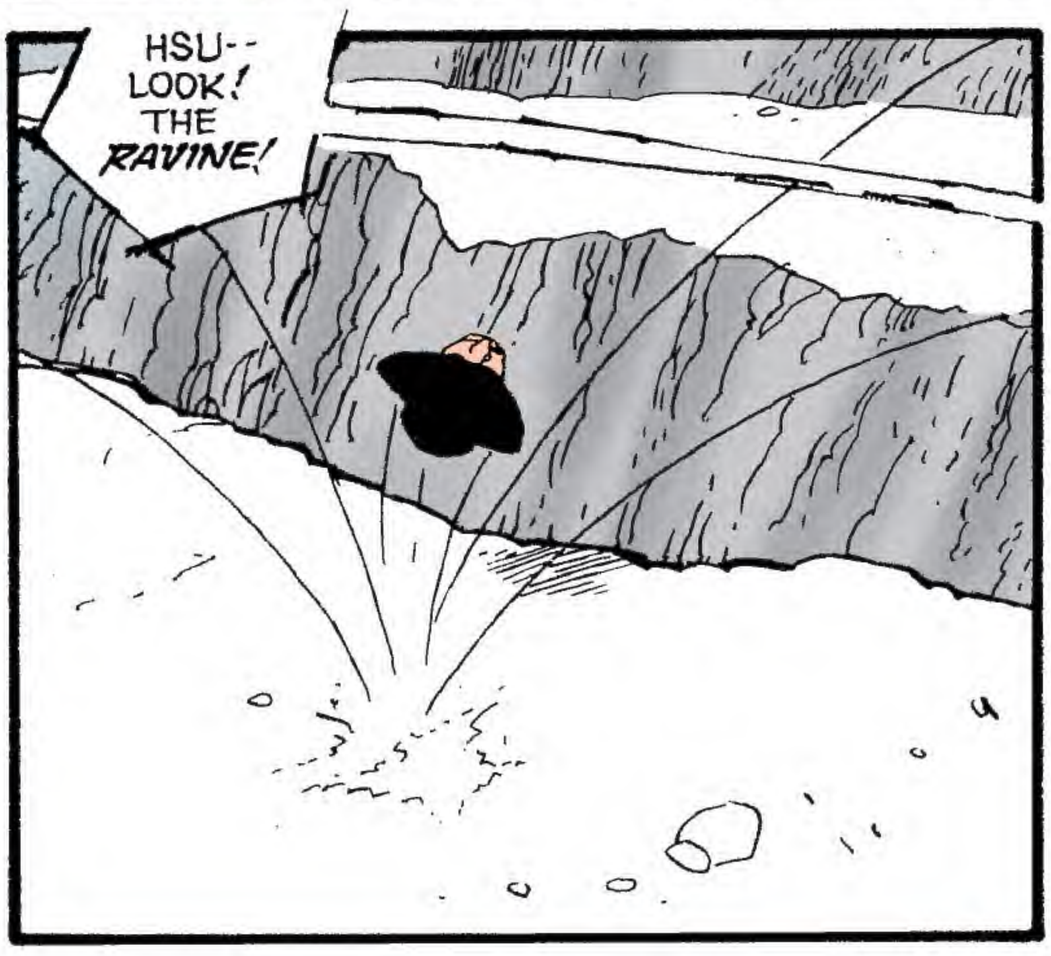
BOOM

TWUK

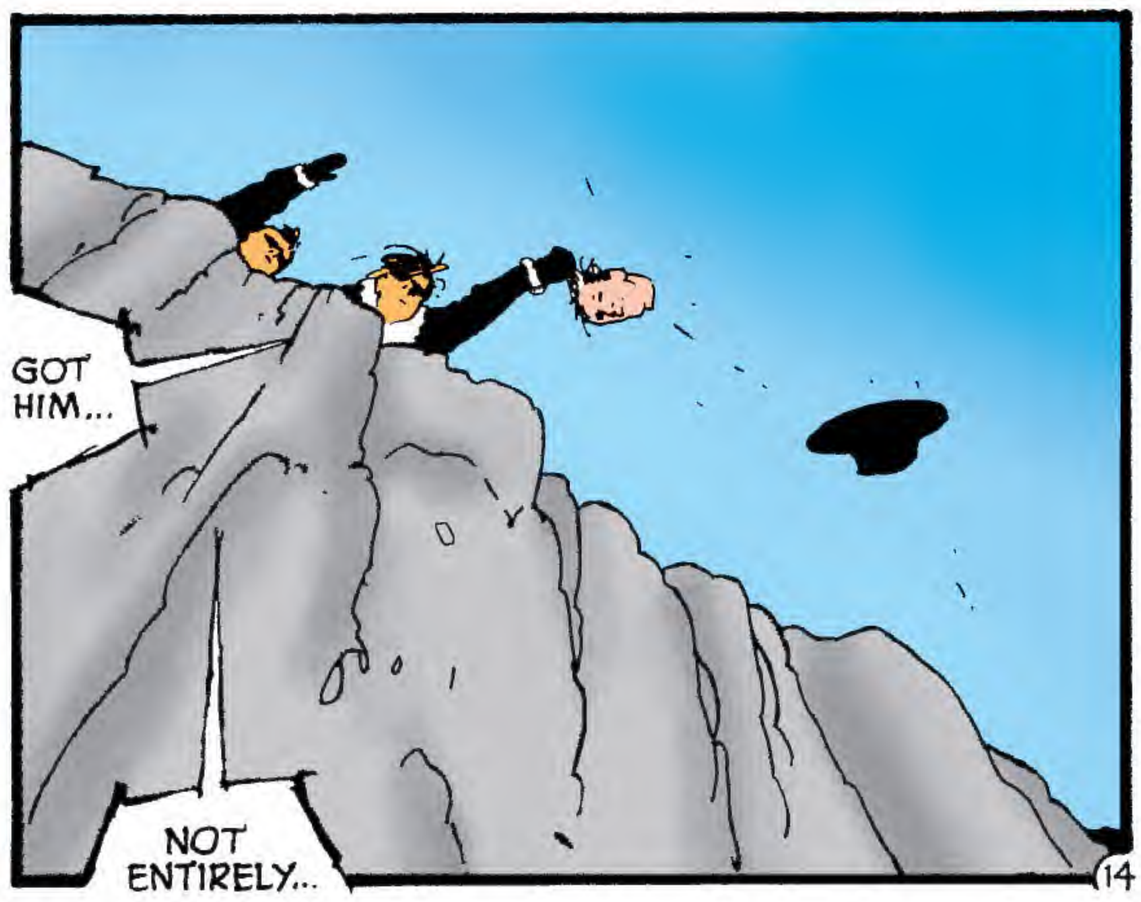

FATHER!!


FATHER?


FATHER-- STOP!!
OH, MY GOD-- HSU! WHAT HAVE WE DONE?!
WE? YOU FIRED--


HSU-- LOOK! THE RAVINE!


FATHER--!!!


GOT HIM...
NOT ENTIRELY...

WHUP WHUP WHUP WHUP WHUP

SHIT... STUPID COWBOY... GET HIMSELF *KILLED*..

STARTED OUT AS A *SEARCH AND DESTROY*.. ENDS UP A *SALVAGE JOB*...

LOOK! THERE IT IS... OR WHAT'S *LEFT* OF IT...

WHUP WHUP WHUP WHUP

ROTOR MUST'A LOPPED 'IS HEAD *CLEAN OFF*... NOW WHAT THE HELL AM I GONNA TELL ODESSA...?

SHEE, HOGAN-- ALL SHE *SAID* WAS SHE WANTED HIS *BODY*... DIN'T SAY A *WHIT* ABOUT THE *HEAD*...

'SIDES, IT'S PROBABLY *BETTER* THIS WAY-- GETTIN' HER PRIZE WITHOUT THE HEAD.

WHUP WHUP WHUP WHUP

...IT'LL GIVE 'ER SOMETHING TO LOOK *FORWARD* TO...

HEY! COME BACK. HERE, YOU *CREEP!*

BUST YER *FACE*, JERK!

YO-- HSU! CHANG! WE CHASED 'EM OFF!

ALL BY USSELVES!

AIN'T THAT *RADICAL*--?

UH... WHAT'S THAT YOU GOT THERE...?

FATHER... HE... I...

OH, *WOW!*

COOL! A HEAD! JUST... A *HEAD!!*

C'N I TOUCH IT...?

I SUPPOSE...

HEY, COME ON, GUYS... HE WAS DEAD ANYWAY! I MEAN--IT'S NOT LIKE HE *FELT* IT OR ANYTHING...!

TRUE... BUT WE WERE BECOMING SO *ACCUSTOMED* TO HIS PRESENCE... AND NOW... TO HAVE TO SEE HIM THIS WAY...

LOOK--I GOT A *KNAPSACK*-- IF LOOKIN' *BOTHERS* YOU SO MUCH--JUST DROP IT IN...

THANKS...

I SUPPOSE WE SHOULD BE GOING NOW... OUR DESTINATION IS BUT A FEW MILES OFF... BARRING ANY *MORE* DISASTERS...

NOOO PROBLEMO, HSU-- FROM HERE ON IN... IT'S *SMOOTH SAILING!*

TAXI

IT'S LIKE DEY SAY--IN THIS CITY, YOU C'N NEVER FIND A *COP* WHEN YA WANT ONE...

AIN'T IT DE TRUT', MON... AIN'T IT DE TRUT'!

T'REE HOURS WE BEEN SEARCHIN'-- HIGH 'N' LOW... BUT DE POLICE BE 'ARDER TO FINE DEN GANGA IN DE *SAHARA!*

YEAH... BUT IT'S GOOD T'BE UP AN' WORKIN' AGAIN... I TELL YA, PERCY, WIDDOUT D'SHADOW TA RUN AROUND DOIN' ERRANDS FER... I BEEN PUTTIN' ON A LITTLE WEIGHT...

I DUNNO, THOUGH... THIS AVENGER GUY SEEMS LIKE A RIGHT JOE T'ME... WOULDN'T BE SO BAD WORKIN' FER *HIM* FROM NOW ON...

...WONDER IF HE'S GOT ONE'A DEM *BENEFIT PLANS* LIKE THE MASTER USETA...

FOR GOD'S SAKE, MISTER MAGNET! WHY'D YOU DRAG ME OUT *HERE?* THE INOCULATOR WAS RIGHT IN FRONT OF ME! HELPLESS TO DO *ANTHING*--

--EXCEPT GIVE ME AN *EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW!*

REMEMBER YOUR ULCER, KID. COMPLAINING W'ON'T HELP.

BUT WHAT ABOUT MY *STORY?* MY *CAREER?* MY *LIFE?!*

JUST SIT TIGHT-- I GOT A *BETTER* STORY COMING UP. PULITZER MATERIAL, GUARANTEED.

SO GET OUT THAT NOTEPAD OF YOURS, KID. THERE IT IS.

JUST FEEL IT, ELTON... IT FEELS *RIGHT*, DOESN'T IT?

HE'S THE ONE I *KNOW* IT. WHEN THIS IS OVER, I POP THE QUESTION.

I DON'T KNOW, MAVIS -- I MEAN, WE DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT HE REALLY *LOOKS LIKE*-- AND HE'S AWFULLY *OLD*--

I THINK...

~CHRRRK~ MAGNET TO MOTHER-- COME IN, MOTHER.

GOT THE STAGE SET -- UP ON 125TH. YOU COPY?

WE COPY, MAGNET-- AND WE'RE ON THE WAY.

AND HURRY.

YOU GOT IT-- MASTER.

125TH STREET

MASTER...?

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THERE THEY ARE-- INSIDE THAT ALLEY. WHAT'S OUR NEXT MOVE, MASTER...?

PLEASE, MAVIS-- CALL ME *RICHARD.*

NOW JUST CIRCLE THE BLOCK. I'LL HOP OFF AROUND THE CORNER--

POLICE

--AND COME INTO THE ALLEY THROUGH THE BACK.

KEEP AN EYE ON THAT POLICE CAR-- I'LL BE IN IT.

WE'LL GET TO THE BOTTOM OF THIS-- AND THEN SETTLE ACCOUNTS FOR GOOD.

IT'S SHORT FIVE GRAND

OH, YEAH? WELL, WELL, *WELL*, AIN'T THAT A *COINCIDENCE?*

WE'RE SHORT *FIVE GRAND...*

...AND *YOU'RE* SHORT FIVE *INCHES...*

BLAM

WALK ON *THAT*, PAL.

GEEZ, WALLY-- THE KID'LL BE A *GIMP* THE REST OF HIS *LIFE!*

HEY-- I'M JUST FOLLOWIN' ORDERS! NOW, FILL THE BAG BACK UP AND GIVE IT HERE.

WHAT'SA MATTER, WALLY-- DON'T YOU TRUST US?

LISSEN-- BOSS SAYS BUMP OFF A BROAD, I BUMP OFF A BROAD. BOSS SAYS DON'T LET THE MONEY OUTTA YER SIGHT-- I DO THAT, TOO.

I'M A *GRUNT*-- JUST LIKE YOU GUYS.

NOW EXCUSE ME A SEC--GOTTA GO TAKE A *WHIZ.*

OH, MAN... I REALLY NEEDED THAT.

EXCUSE ME, WALLY-- BUT I NEED TO BORROW SOMETHING OF YOURS.

WHAT--?

I NEED YOUR *FACE*.

WHAM

YO, WALLY--WHAT'S TAKING YOU? YOU COUNTIN' THE *FAMILY JEWELS* IN THERE OR WHAT?

HURRY IT UP, WALLY-BOY-- *UNCLE* WON'T LIKE IT IF YER LATE!

YEAH-- AN' YOU DON'T WANT UNCLE TO BE *MAD* AT YOU, EH, WALLY-BOY?

SHUP UP, JERK.

THAT'S OUR BOY WALLY--ALWAYS WITH THE SNAPPY COMEBACK!

HOW DO YA DO IT, WALLY? I MEAN-- A MIND LIKE THAT... WHATTA *WIT*!

YOU COULD *DIE* IN YOUR *SLEEP* ONE NIGHT, YOU KNOW, MIKE?

YEAH--WELL, NOT BY YOU, IT LOOKS. WHAT'D YOU DO WITH YER *GUN*, WALLY-- LEAVE IT IN THE ALLEY?

YOU WANNA GO BACK?

NO--IT'S IN THE BAG. HAD ENOUGH SHOOTING FOR ONE NIGHT.

YEAH? WELL, MAYBE THAT AIN'T SUCH A GOOD IDEA, WALLY...

I MEAN-- A COP AIN'T A COP WITHOUT HIS *GUN*...

SHUT UP, MIKE.

THE AMAZING VINCENT

POLICE

18

HERE WE ARE, FELLAS-- BACK TO THE ROOST.

YEP--THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME, EH, WALLY?

RIGHT.

POLICE

"To Serve and Protect"

POLICE

COME ON, WALLY-- DON'T YOU GOT *ANY* SENSE OF *JOB SATISFACTION?*

ME, I *LOVE* THIS JOB-- *ESPECIALLY* WHEN THE HAULS GET AS BIG AS TONIGHT'S!

TELL ME ABOUT IT-- I CAN *REALLY* USE *THIS* CASH. I FIGURE MY CUT SHOULD PAY FOR THE PLACE IN BOCA RATON--

--*AND* FER THE MISSUS'S *FRENCH LESSONS*, BESIDES...

HOW 'BOUT *YOU*, WALLY? WHATTA *YOU* DO WITH THE CASH?

YOU STILL GOT THAT SICK OLD MAMA IN THE *BRONX...?*

HUH? OH... RIGHT. YEAH--SHE'S STILL HANGIN' IN THERE, THE OLD HAG.

OLD HAG? *WALLY!* WHAT THE HELL IS *WRONG* WITH YOU?

IF *WE* EVER SAID A *WORD* ABOUT YOUR DEAR MAMA, YOU'D *KILL US!*

SHE'S A *SAINT*, YOU SAID... REMEMBER?

J. BARRYMORE MARX POLICE COMMISSIONER

WALLY;-- I'M WORRIED ABOUT YOU! YOU KNOW WHAT *I* THINK?

ASK ME IF I CARE.

I THINK YOUR *UNCLE* GAVE YOU AN *OVERDOSE* OF *HOMICIDAL MANIAC PILLS!*

HAW HAW!!

THAT'S *RICH!*

AND SPEAKING OF *UNCLE--*

HEY WALLY! WHERE YOU *GOIN?* WE'RE HERE!

J. BARRYMORE MARX POLICE COMMISSIONER

OH.

YEAH.

AH! GOOD EVENING, BOYS! HELLO, WALLY.

I, AHH... TRUST YOU TOOK CARE OF THE *OTHER* LITTLE ASSIGNMENT I GAVE YOU THIS MORNING...?

ALL TAKEN CARE OF... UNC.

GOOD...GOOD...NOW THEN, GENTLEMEN--HOW WERE OUR ASSOCIATES THIS EVENING? NO TROUBLE, I SUPPOSE.

JUST A LITTLE, COMMISH. BUT THEY WON'T MAKE THE SAME MISTAKE AGAIN. WALLY FIXED 'EM.

THAT'S MY BOY.

HMM... THE WAGES OF SIN WERE *GOOD* TONIGHT, EH? TEN GRAND APIECE FOR YOU BOYS-- AND FIFTY GRAND INTO THE *PENSION FUND*...

MAY HAVE TO DIP INTO IT SOON, CHIEF--WHAT WITH THAT INOCULATOR FELLA RUNNIN' AROUND BUMPIN' US OFF...

THE WIFE'S GETTIN' A LITTLE ANTSY ABOUT IT-- SHE THINKS MAYBE I OUGHTTA GO LEGIT -- START MINDIN' MY P'S AND Q'S...

DON'T WORRY ABOUT THE INOCULATOR, BOYS--I'VE PULLED SOME STRINGS AND HAVE BEEN *ASSURED HE'LL* BE OUT OF THE PICTURE MOMENTARILY.

IMAGINE-- TAKING THE LAW INTO HIS OWN HANDS...*KILLING* THE SCUM WE'VE SET OURSELVES UP TO *EXPLOIT*! I MEAN-- ALL THE *MONEY* HE COULD HAVE MADE...WHAT A CHUMP...

YES, INDEED, THE INOCULATOR WAS NOTHING BUT A DANGEROUS *CHUMP*--

AND AS EVERY GOOD COP *KNOWS*-- IT *TAKES* ONE TO *KILL* ONE--

BLAM BLAM BLAM BLAM BLAM

GEEZ, WALLY! WHAT'D YOU DO?

I KILLED HIM. HE DESERVED IT. CALLED ME A *CHUMP.*

FOLLOW ME--AND I'LL KILL YOU, TOO

J BARRIMOR MARX PO CO

SHOTS FIRED! SHOTS FIRED!

WHERE'D THEY COME FROM?

THERE -- COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE!

CAN'T BELIEVE IT-- A *SHOOTING*-- RIGHT HERE IN *COP HEAVEN!*

HEARD HE GOT *MARX*-- PLUGGED HIM FOUR TIMES!

LIKE TO SHAKE THE HAND OF THE MAN THAT DID IT!

EXCUSE ME, LADY--NO PARKING HERE.

OH. I'M SORRY, OFFICER, I'LL--

SURE--

JUST KIDDING. IT'S ME.

THAT RADIO PICK UP *POLICE BAND?*

WELL, TURN IT ON, THEN--

--AND LET'S GET THE HELL OUT OF HERE...

THE AMAZING VINCENT

-:CHRRRK:- BE ON THE LOOKOUT WALLY AMBERS. POLICE OFFICER. ARMED AND DANGEROUS. REPEAT... -:CHRRK:-

OOOHH, MAN... WHAT THE HELL...?

BASTARDS! THEY STOLE MY FRIGGIN' UNIFORM!

TRYIN' TO MAKE A FOOL OF ME, EH? THINK THIS IS SOME KIND OF GAME?

I'LL SHOW THEM BASTARDS! I STILL GOT MY GUN--AND A COP'S ALWAYS A COP, LONG AS HE'S GOT HIS GUN!

SO, WHERE'S THIS GREAT STORY, HUH, MISTER MAGNET?

I MEAN, WE'VE BEEN WAITIN' OVER AN HOUR AND NOTHING'S HAPPENING!

THERE'S YOUR STORY, KID.

WHERE--?

RIGHT OVER THERE.

WHERE ARE THEY?! LET ME AT THEM! I'LL KILL 'EM!

KILL 'EM ALL!

AIEEEE!!! HELP! POLICE!

YEAH! CALL THE POLICE! SCREAM FOR 'EM! HERE--I'LL HELP!

BLAM BLAM

BASTARDS! ALWAYS MAKING FUN OF ME! LAUGHING BEHIND MY BACK! JUST 'CAUSE UNC GOT ME IN DOESN'T MEAN I CAN'T CUT IT ON MY OWN!

I'LL SHOW 'EM! I CAN FIGHT! I CAN KILL! I CAN--

EEOOO EEOOO EOOO

SCREEECH!

OKAY, WALLY-- DROP THE GUN.

YEAH-- YOU'D LIKE THAT, WOULDN'T YOU--

--SO YOU COULD GIVE IT BACK TO *UNC*--TELL HIM I *LOST IT* AGAIN!

NOT *THIS TIME*, PAL--THIS TIME I'M *USING* IT!

LISTEN, WALLY...WE WON'T BE GIVING IT BACK TO YOUR UNCLE.

HE'S DEAD. YOU KILLED HIM. THERE WERE THREE WITNESSES-

CUT THE CRAP, MAX--JUST BLOW HIM AWAY!

NEVER LIKED THAT KID ANYWAY-- NOW LOOK AT HIM! RUNNING AROUND IN HIS *SHORTS*-- HE'S A DISGRACE TO THE FORCE!

PLEASE, SIR--I'LL HANDLE THIS.

WALLY...PUT THE GUN DOWN. YOU NEED HELP. YOU'RE *SICK*.

SICK? HE'S *LOONEY TUNES!*

OHHH, NO! I'M A *COP!* MY UNCLE TOLD ME A COP *NEVER* PUTS HIS GUN DOWN!

I MAY GO DOWN--BUT YOU'LL HAVE TO PRY *THIS* FROM MY *DEAD FINGERS!*

BLAM

SPARK

FIRE!

HOLY--! MAX! WILL YOU--!

BLAM BLAM BLAM BLAM BLAM BLAM

-:CHRRRK:- REQUESTING AN AMBULANCE... WE GOT AN...UMM... OFFICER DOWN. I MEAN...HE *WAS* AN OFFICER. WENT A LITTLE CRAZY. TELL THE GUYS AT E.M.S. TO TAKE THEIR TIME. HE'S DEAD.

AND NO ONE WILL EVER KNOW...

CLIK

WELL, YA CAN'T SAY WE DIDN'T TELL YA SO...

NO, YOU'RE RIGHT. I WAS DECEIVED... AS I HAVE BEEN SO MANY TIMES BEFORE...

IRONIC, DON'T YOU THINK-- I'VE DEVOTED MY LIFE TO THE STUDY OF *MASKS*...

AND YET, I'M SO EASILY FOOLED BY THE MASKS OF *OTHERS*...

AWW, DON'T FEEL BAD.. EVERYBODY MAKES MISTAKES...

I SUPPOSE... THANKFULLY, *THIS* TIME IT WASN'T A *FATAL* ERROR... BUT I OWE ALL OF YOU AN APOLOGY...

ESPECIALLY *YOU*, MY FRIEND.. WHAT WAS IT-- TWITCHKOWITZ?

MY FRIENDS CALL ME TWITCH.

AND MINE CALL ME RICHARD.

NOW, PLEASE-- IT'S BEEN A LONG NIGHT FOR ALL OF US-- ALLOW ME TO BUY YOU ALL SOME BREAKFAST... AND THEN, WITH ANY LUCK, WE'LL ALL BE IN BED BEFORE DAWN...

COME.

AFRAID I'LL HAVE TO SIT THIS ONE OUT, RICHIE. MATTER OF FACT, I'LL BE OUT OF CIRCULATION FOR A *WHILE*-- AT LEAST UNTIL THIS *DYE* WEARS OFF.

WHATEVER WAS I THINKING WHEN I DOUSED MYSELF...?

WELL, WE *ALL* MAKE MISTAKES, TWITCH...

I'M TELLING YOU, ELTON-- HE'S OUR MAN. WITH HIM TO GUIDE US, IT'D BE LIKE OLD TIMES ALL OVER AGAIN!

AS SOON AS WE GET TO THE DINER, I'M ASKING HIM.

WHY WAIT-- WHY DON'T YOU DO IT *NOW*...?

ALL RIGHT... *I WILL!*

EXCUSE ME, MAS--UH...RICHARD. I WAS WONDERING...THAT IS-- YOU KNOW OUR PRESENT SITUATION--WITH THE SHADOW DEAD, WE'RE CURRENTLY...UH,..WITHOUT A MASTER...AND WE WERE THINKING... SINCE WE SEEMED TO WORK SO WELL TONIGHT...

...MAYBE YOU'D GIVE SOME THOUGHT TO LEADING US...?

NO, MAVIS--I TOOK THAT ROUTE ONCE... AND IT CAME TO A VERY UGLY END.

I'M AFRAID THERE WILL BE NO MORE JUSTICE INCORPORATEDS IN MY FUTURE...LET ALONE A *SHADOWCORPS*...

C'MON, CREW--LET'S MOVE IT! TRAIN COMING!

BUT IT WOULDN'T BE SO *BAD!* WE'VE GOT AGENTS YOU HAVEN'T EVEN *MET* YET! IT'S A WHOLE *NETWORK*--AND YOU COULD BE THE *BRAINS* BEHIND IT!

SORRY, MAVIS--BUT THE ANSWER IS STILL NO.

BUT I *INSIST*--!

I WAS AFRAID YOU WOULD.

GOODBYE, MAVIS... IT WAS A PLEASURE...

HEY! WHERE'D HE--

--GO...

GEEZ-- THAT'S *GREAT*, MAVIS-- JUST *GREAT!* WE COULD'A CHOWED DOWN FER *FREE*-- AN' *YOU* BLEW IT!

YOU KNOW, ELT-- SOMETIMES I DON'T THINK WE'RE *EVER* GOING TO FIND SOMEONE TO REPLACE THE MASTER...

ACTUALLY, I THINK WE'VE RUN OUT OF *CHOICES*... NOW ALL THAT'S LEFT...

"...ARE THE MASTER'S *SONS*..."

NOT MUCH FARTHER NOW, CHILDREN...

SOON, YOU SHALL ALL HAVE A *NEW HOME*... NEW *PARENTS*... A *NEW* AND *GLORIOUS* LIFE...

...FOR *YOU*, AN *ETERNITY* OF *PLEASURE*...

...AND FOR *US*, AN *ETERNITY* OF *SHAME*.

IT WILL BE *QUITE* A *HOMECOMING*, EH, BROTHER?

BAD ENOUGH WE ALLOWED FATHER TO *DIE*...

...BUT TO RETURN WITH *ONLY* HIS *HEAD*... AND IN A *CHILD'S BACKPACK*, YET...

WHAT DO YOU *SUGGEST*, CHANG? *GIFT WRAPPING*?

I HAVE A *BETTER* IDEA, BROTHER.

CONTINUE, PLEASE, CHANG...

WE *STOP* OUR JOURNEY NOW-- AND RETURN TO THE *WEST*. WE'LL TAKE THE CHILDREN, OF COURSE... AND WHEN WE GET TO NEW YORK, WE PACK UP FATHER'S REMAINS--

--AND *MAIL* THEM TO SHAMBALA! WITHOUT A *RETURN ADDRESS*, NO ONE WILL *EVER KNOW*!

BROTHER-- HAVE YOU TAKEN LEAVE OF YOUR *SENSES*?

THERE *ARE* NO *POST OFFICES* IN SHAMBALA!

HMM...THAT *IS* A POINT TO CONSIDER...

THEN THERE IS *NO* CHOICE. UPON OUR ARRIVAL, WE MUST SIMPLY FACE THE ELDERS, AND TELL THEM OUR STORY.

PREFERABLY, AS THE *AMERICANS* SAY-- A *WHOPPER*.

I CONCUR, BROTHER-- AND WHATEVER WE *DO* DECIDE TO TELL THEM--

...WE HAD BETTER THINK IT UP *QUICKLY*...

NEXT → **THE SHADOW RETURNS** ...IN A MANNER OF SPEAKING.



#19

cover art by KYLE BAKER
















WELL, WELL... LOOK WHO'S BACK!

HAVE A NICE SLEEP, KENT?

...

NO, NO... DON'T BOTHER TRYING TO *ANSWER*-- YOU'RE NOT HOOKED UP FOR SOUND NOW.

YOU *WERE*--BUT THE *SNORING* WAS DRIVING ME *CRAZY*...

SHADOW™

BODY AND SOUL: CONCLUSION

FULL METAL SHADOW

AN ACT OF SHAMELESS DESPERATION BY:

ANDY HELFER	KYLE BAKER	BOB LAPPAN	TOM ZIUKO	RENÉE WITTERSTAETTER	MIKE CARLIN
STORY	PICTURES	LETTERS	COLORS	ASSISTANT EDITS	EDITS

YES... YOU *DO* SEEM TO BE *SHORT* A FEW PARTS. BUT NOT TO WORRY-- I'VE GOT A TISSUE SAMPLE PERCOLATING OVER IN THE CLONING TANKS EVEN AS WE-- UH-- *I* SPEAK.

ONCE IT'S READY, WE'LL DO A NEURAL MAP TRANSFER-- AND YOU'LL BE AS GOOD AS NEW...

OH, COME ON, KENT-- BE A *SPORT!* IT'S NOT OFTEN THAT I GET TO HAVE THE FIRST *AND* LAST WORD WITH YOU! BESIDES--

--YOU'RE SO *CUTE* WHEN YOU'RE ANGRY!

OKAY, OKAY. I *KNEW* THIS WAS TOO GOOD TO LAST...

HERE.

CLICK

HAPPY NOW?

DON'T EVER DO THAT AGAIN.

AHH, THERE YOU GO AGAIN!

I MEAN-- WHERE IS YOUR SENSE OF *GRATITUDE*?

LOOK AT YOU-- YOU'RE A *HEAD*, FOR GOODNESS' SAKE! ANYONE ELSE IN YOUR POSITION *MIGHT* BE A LITTLE *GRATEFUL*-- OR AT *LEAST* A LITTLE *CURIOUS*!

ALL RIGHT, RUDRA... SINCE YOU'RE *DYING* TO TELL ME... WHERE *IS* THE REST OF ME...?

THE LAST I REMEMBER, A MAD DOCTOR NAMED *FLAX* SPIT A MOUTHFUL OF POISON GAS IN MY FACE...

YES -- AND YOU *DIED* BACK THERE-- WE PICKED UP THE SATELLITE NEWSCASTS-- YOU WERE QUITE THE TOPIC OF CONVERSATION HERE.

CHU THE BOOKMAKER WAS FLOODED WITH BETS ON HOW LONG IT WOULD TAKE FOR YOU TO BE BROUGHT BACK HERE FOR REVIVIFICATION.

OF COURSE, *NONE* OF US THOUGHT YOU'D RETURN IN SUCH A STATE...RECONSTRUCTING THE DETERIORATED DATA IN YOUR BRAIN TESTED THE LIMITS OF OUR TECHNOLOGY...

...BUT I THINK WE'VE DONE A PRETTY GOOD JOB OF IT, ALL THINGS CONSIDERED...

BUT *HOW!* DID THIS HAPPEN TO M--

DON'T TELL ME...

...HSU TEI AND CHANG.

VERY GOOD, KENT-- AND YOU DIDN'T EVEN HAVE TO READ MY MIND...

THEY ARRIVED TWO DAYS AGO-- WITH A GANG OF HOODLUMS... AND YOUR HEAD.

THEY BABBLED ON FOR *HOURS*-- GIBBERISH ABOUT SALVAGING YOUR REMAINS FROM THE JAWS OF SOME PREHISTORIC ICE MONSTER.

THEY WERE LYING THROUGH THEIR TEETH-- AND *WE* DIDN'T NEED TO READ *THEIR* MINDS TO KNOW THAT.

THEY SEEM TO FEAR THAT OUR *ELDERS* INTEND TO PUT THEM TO DEATH FOR BRINGING YOU BACK IN YOUR CURRENT CONDITION.

WE'RE *STILL* NOT SURE WHAT *REALLY* HAPPENED... BUT WE'RE NOT *BARBARIANS!* WE CAN'T *EXECUTE* THEM FOR MERE CARELESSNESS!

I'M NOT SO CERTAIN ABOUT *THAT*...

TRY TO LOOK AT IT FROM *MY* POINT OF VIEW...

FAR BE IT FOR ME TO DEFEND YOUR SONS, KENT--BUT THIS IS WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU SEND *BOYS* OUT TO DO A *PALADIN'S* JOB!

I *TOLD* YOU THEY WEREN'T READY-- I EVEN OFFERED YOU *TWO* OF OUR FINEST SHADOW WARRIORS!

BUT YOU INSISTED *THEY* ACCOMPANY YOU TO NEW YORK--

--TO CARRY ON THE *FAMILY TRADITION*--

HOW MANY TIMES DO I HAVE TO TELL YOU, KENT--NEPOTISM AND CRIME FIGHTING DON'T MIX! YOU'RE *LIVING PROOF* OF *THAT!*

RUDRA--LET'S NOT BICKER OVER THIS. THEY'RE *MY* SONS... *I'LL* TAKE CARE OF THEM AS SOON AS I'M BACK ON--

--MY FEET...

HOW LONG, RUDRA?

FOR THE CLONE? ABOUT THREE WEEKS, I'M AFRAID.

TOO LONG. I'M ALREADY STARTING TO FEEL A BIT... ITCHY.

CAN'T DO ANYTHING ABOUT IT. WE MAY BE MIRACLE WORKERS HERE IN SHAMBALA, BUT THESE THINGS STILL TAKE TIME.

THERE *IS* ONE OTHER POSSIBILITY... THOUGH IT'S AN *IFFY* ONE, GIVEN THE UNTIMELY DEPARTURE OF DOCTOR HONG...

HONG? I DON'T RECALL...

OUR CYBERNETICS SPECIALIST. ONE OF OUR GREAT DISAPPOINTMENTS. HE FLED SHAMBALA LAST MONTH WITH TWO PALADINS.

LEFT A NOTE IN HIS LAB THAT HE WAS OFF TO SEEK FAME AND FORTUNE IN THE WEST. HE TOOK MOST OF HIS RESEARCH, BUT LEFT A... PROTOTYPE BEHIND.

WE MIGHT ATTEMPT A HOOK UP--JUST AS AN *INTERIM* MEASURE, MIND YOU--

FINE. LET'S GET STARTED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

AND RUDRA--?

YES?

MY SONS... HAVE YOU TOLD THEM ABOUT... MY *CONDITION* YET...?

NO--

"WE *KNEW YOU'D* WANT TO BE THE *FIRST* TO TELL THEM THE GOOD NEWS..."

IT IS *GOOD* TO BE BACK HOME, EH, BROTHER...?

INDEED, CHANG. I HAD ALMOST FORGOTTEN THE SPLENDOR OF SHAMBALA...

WE WILL ALL HAVE TIME TO REACQUAINT OURSELVES WITH IT...ONCE WE DELIVER FATHER'S REMAINS TO THE ELDERS.

HOUSE OF ELDERS

I WILL BE HAPPY WHEN WE ARE RID OF HIM, CHANG-- IN THIS WARMER CLIMATE, HIS *ODOR* IS BECOMING *OVERPOWERING!*

IT SHALL NOT BE LONG *NOW*, HSU--LOOK THERE-- OUR *DESTINATION* AT LAS--

HEY--!

VRRRRRRRRRRR

GOR! WATCH WHERE YER GOIN', YA *BLOODY FOOLS!*

FATHER!

CHANG! CATCH HIM-- BEFORE HE--

BOINK

BOINK

WH-WHERE DID HE *GO*, CHANG...?

HE *MUST* BE HERE *SOMEWHERE*, HSU--

SPLISH SPLASH

THERE! I THINK I HEAR HIM NOW--

REARRRGH

HSU-- LOOK OUT--

CHOMP

HSU!!!

CREEEAK

FEAR NOT, BROTHER! THERE HAS NEVER BEEN AN ALLIGATOR BORN THAT COULD BEST A PALADIN-IN-TRAINING!

THOUGH I *DO* WONDER HOW HE CAME TO LURK IN THE SEWERS OF SHAMBALA...

AH! IT APPEARS WE HAVE NOT STRAYED TOO FAR FROM OUR PATH!

COME! THE SOONER WE ARE RID OF FATHER'S REMAINS, THE SOONER I WILL FEEL AT EASE ONCE AGAIN!

ELDERS NEXT LEFT

TAKE YER BAGS, SIR?

NO...

WELL-- YOU NEED ANYTHING, JUST CALL...

NOW HURRY ON IN. THEY'RE ALL WAITIN'...

WELCOME, SONS OF ALLARD. HOW FARED YOUR JOURNEY-- AND WHAT'S THAT *UNGODLY ODOR?*

I-IT'S *FATHER,* SIR...

EH? THAT'S *ALL* OF HIM... IN A *SACK?*

WE DID OUR *BEST* TO PRESERVE WHAT WE COULD...

LIARS!!

FATHER?

YOU *FAILED* ME -- BOTH OF YOU! YOU'VE *TAINTED* THE FAMILY NAME -- AND SULLIED THE HONOR OF ALL SHAMBALA'S PALADINS!

FOR *THAT,* THE PUNISHMENT IS *DEATH!*

FATHER-- *PLEASE!* WE-WE ARE *INNOCENT--!*

GUILTY! *GUILTY! GUILTY!*

NO!

NOOOOOO!

NOOOOO..?!?

BROTHER--I HAD THE MOST *TERRIBLE DREAM*--

AS DID I, CHANG! IN IT, FATHER'S *HEAD* SPOKE TO US--

--AND THE ELDERS WERE TRANSFORMED INTO THE PEOPLE OF MALICE--?

EXACTLY!

BROTHER--THE BURDEN OF *SHAME* WE CARRY IS *TOO GREAT!* IT HAUNTS OUR VERY *DREAMS!*

PERHAPS WE SHOULD CONFESS OUR *NEGLIGENCE* TO THE *ELDERS* BEFORE THE GUILT *CONSUMES* US FROM WITHIN!

PERHAPS. THEIR SENTENCE WILL BE *HARSH.*

NO DOUBT.

THEY MAY CONDEMN US TO *ETERNAL EXILE...* BUT *PROBABLY DEATH.*

IS THERE A *CHOICE?* I DO NOT BELIEVE I CAN SURVIVE ANOTHER ENCOUNTER WITH MY *CONSCIENCE!*

IT MIGHT BE *SIMPLER* IF WE AGREED TO SLEEP IN *SHIFTS...*

AND PLEDGED NEVER TO CONSUME GREAT QUANTITIES OF ALCOHOL AGAIN...?

YES... THAT IS A MUCH BETTER IDEA.

NOW COME ALONG-- LET US SEE HOW THE CHILDREN OF MALICE ARE ADJUSTING TO THEIR NEW ENVIRONMENT...

FAIRLY *WELL*, I'D SAY...

YES, BROTHER. THEY ARE BEING *INDOCTRINATED* EVEN AS WE SPEAK.

AMAZING! ONLY *TWO DAYS* AND ALREADY THEY ARE ON THE ROAD TO BECOMING *MODEL CITIZENS*...

ROCKET DUDE

PAC-RAMBO

HOLL CHA HOO

AH! I REMEMBER THIS EPISODE! AT THE CLIMAX A MASS OF ALIEN *ENTRAILS* SURGES--

SHHH! YOU'LL *SPOIL IT!*

SORRY, I--

BLAM

SONUVA *BITCH!* I TOL' YOU WHAT I'D DO IF YOU BEAT ME *AGAIN!*

HOW YOU LIKE *THAT, CORPORATE RAIDER MAN?!*

CORPORATE RAIDER

BART!

IT IS MERELY A *SIMULATION!*

TELL MISTER *RAIDER* THAT! HE JUST BLEW MY *ASSETS* OFF!

BUT YOU STILL HAD TWO MORE LIVES!

THAT IS *HARDLY* THE POINT! IF YOU INTEND TO REMAIN HERE, YOU MUST LEARN TO CONTROL YOUR *RAGE*-- SUCH ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOR IS FROWNED UPON HERE!

AND WHERE DID YOU GET THAT *WEAPON?*

I *DISTINCTLY* REMEMBER HIDING IT *UNDER* MY BED WHEN WE FIRST ARRIVED!

HECK... JUST WANTED A LITTLE *SECURITY* IS ALL... THIS PLACE IS SO DAMN *QUIET*... SO *PEACEFUL*... MAKES ME *JUMPY*...

CHILD! PUT YOUR BITTER MEMORIES OF MALICE BEHIND YOU! YOU ARE *SAFE* HERE!

BESIDES--WEAPONS OF *ANY KIND* ARE *FORBIDDEN* IN SHAMBALA! IF IT WERE TO BE DISCOVERED WE *SMUGGLED* A FIREARM IN WITH US, WE COULD BE SEVERELY--

SHOOP

HSU TEI. CHANG. PLEASE COME WITH US.

UH-OH.

ORDER. ORDER! ORDER!!

I STILL SAY WE SHOULD ATTEMPT TO *REBUILD!* OUR *ROOTS* ARE IN *MALICE*-- AND HERE, WE ARE *SAFE* FROM THE *LAW* THAT WOULD--

THAT'S *IT!*

ONE MORE WORD, HANS, AND YOU'RE IN VIOLATION OF ARTICLE 5.1 OF THE MALICE PENAL CODE!

DO I MAKE MYSELF CLEAR?

UH... I... YES, ARBITRATOR.

GOOD. NOW, THIS IS SUPPOSED TO BE AN ORDERLY-TYPE EMERGENCY *TOWN MEETING...*

...AND SEEING AS HOW I FULLY INTEND TO SHOOT THE NEXT MAN TO TALK OUT OF TURN, I SUGGEST YOU ALL JUST SIMMER DOWN AND MAKE YOUR POINTS.

OLGA?

I WANNA KNOW WHAT THEY DID WITH THE *CHILDREN!* MY BABY BART TOOK OFF WITH THE *REST* OF 'EM-- AND LEFT *SIX WEEKS'* WORTH OF *DIRTY DISHES* IN THE *SINK!*

WHO AM I GONNA GET TO DO 'EM *NOW?!*

YEAH-- AND EVEN IF WE *WANTED* TO REBUILD *MALICE*, WHO'S GONNA MOVE ALL THEM *ROCKS?* WITHOUT THE KIDS, THERE AIN'T NO *MANUAL LABOR!*

DAMN KIDS. NO RESPECT. AFTER ALL WE DONE FOR THEM, THEY UP AN' LEAVE WITH THE FIRST PAIR OF PIE-IN-THE-SKY PUNKS THEY MEET...

THEY CAN *KEEP* MY KID FOR ALL I CARE! I NEVER *LIKED* HARVEY JUNIOR ANYWAY...

CITIZENS! *CITIZENS!*

TOK TOK

FORGET THE *CHILDREN!* THEY'LL BE BACK! DMITRI'S POSSE WILL TRACK 'EM DOWN! FOR NOW, IT'S THE *FUTURE* OF *MALICE* THAT WE'RE HERE TO DECIDE!!

TO REBUILD OUR BELOVED KLEPTOCRACY, OR DISBAND AND REJOIN THE MAINSTREAM OF CIVILIZATION! *THAT'S* THE ISSUE HERE!

ALL IN FAVOR OF *DISBANDING*, SAY--

WAIT!!!

AH, DMITRI! BLACKIE! YOU'RE *BACK--WITH* THE CHILDREN AND THOSE TWO LOWLIFE LAWBREAKERS, NO DOUBT--?

NOT *EXACTLY.* WE FOLLOWED THEM--AND RETURN TO YOU WITH NEWS OF SOMETHING FAR MORE *VALUABLE...*

WHAT, DMITRI...? SPILL IT.

A MAGNIFICENT CITY AMONG THE MOUNTAINS, NOT *THREE DAYS OFF!* IT WAS LIKE *HEAVEN,* COMRADES! AND ALTHOUGH WE DARED NOT ENTER, WE COULD *SEE* ALL THIS PLACE HAD TO OFFER!

BUILDINGS THAT TOUCH THE CLOUDS! PERSONAL AUTOMOBILES THAT SOAR THROUGH THE AIR! STATE OF THE ART SATELLITE COMMUNICATIONS DEVICES! FIRST-RUN MOTION PICTURE THEATERS!

AND THE *STREETS,* COMRADES...THE STREETS THEMSELVES ARE PAVED WITH *GOLD!*

GOLD...? YOU SURE YOU'RE NOT *EXAGGERATING* A BIT, DMITRI? I THINK THERE'S A *LAW* AGAINST EXAGGERATION IN HERE SOMEWHERE...

WELL, ARBITRATOR--PERHAPS I EMBELLISH A *BIT.* BUT WHAT IS IMPORTANT IS THAT THIS *UTOPIA* CAN BE *CONQUERED!*

RIDICULOUS! IF THIS PLACE IS ALL YOU SAY IT IS, IT MUST *ALSO* HAVE A SECURITY SYSTEM THAT MAKES S.D.I. LOOK LIKE A *SQUIRT GUN!*

THAT IS THE REMARKABLE PART! WE WATCHED AS THE CHILDREN AND THE STRANGERS ENTERED THE CITY WITHOUT INCIDENT!

NO *POLICE...* NO *MILITIA...* NO *LASER BEAMS...* *NOTHING!*

THIS CITY HAS *NO* SECURITY--BECAUSE ITS CITIZENS FULLY BELIEVE THEY WILL NEVER BE DISCOVERED BY THE OUTSIDE WORLD!

AND THERE IS NO *CRIME,* BECAUSE EVERYTHING ONE MIGHT DESIRE IS THERE FOR THE *ASKING!*

BUT WHY *ASK*--WHEN WE CAN SIMPLY *TAKE?*

FORGET WHAT REMAINS OF THIS RAMSHACKLE VILLAGE! FORGET THE HEATLESS NIGHTS, AND AIR-CONDITIONERLESS DAYS! FORGET OUR POVERTY...OUR JEALOUSY...OUR MISERY!

GATHER UP YOUR WEAPONS, COMRADES, AND FOLLOW US! IF WE WORK *TOGETHER,* *PARADISE* CAN BE *OURS!*

ARE YOU WITH ME?!

MEETING ADJOURNED!!

ACTUALLY, WE STILL HAVEN'T FIGURED OUT ALL THE FEATURES. MUCH AS WE TRIED TO DISSUADE HIM, HONG'S RESEARCH KEPT DRIFTING FROM CYBERNETICS TO WEAPONS SYSTEMS.

THIS ONE'S LOADED WITH THEM--PROBLEM IS, ONLY THE *USER* CAN OPERATE THEM. AND WE WERE FRESH OUT OF SPARE HEADS... TILL YOU CAME...

I DON'T KNOW, RUDRA... IT'S NOT THE WAY I IMAGINED IT. IT SEEMS A BIT... *CUMBERSOME*...

WELL, IT'S NO *LEAN MEAN FIGHTING MACHINE*, IF THAT'S WHAT YOU WERE LOOKING FOR...

BUT AT LEAST YOU'LL BE ABLE TO SCRATCH YOUR *OWN* NOSE FOR A CHANGE...

A POINT TO CONSIDER. AND I *WILL*...

SHOOP

AH... HSU TEI CHANG. GOOD TO SEE YOU AGAIN. I--

--EH? WHAT'S *THIS*, PALADIN?

FOUND IN THEIR QUARTERS, DOCTOR. A VIOLATION OF SHAMBALA DISARMAMENT ORDINANCE 4.51. SHALL I CONSULT THE ELDERS FOR CURRENT VIOLATION PENALTY?

NO... IT'S NOT THEIR FAULT. IT'S THE *WEST*. IT... CHANGES PEOPLE. I'LL HANDLE IT.

VERY GOOD, DOCTOR.

HSU... CHANG... WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THIS? YOU KNOW THE *RULES!*

YES, MA'AM. I DON'T KNOW WHAT CAME OVER HIM...

ME?

BOYS, *PLEASE!* I'LL FORGET IT *THIS* TIME... BUT LET'S NOT HAVE THIS HAPPEN AGAIN, OKAY?

BESIDES, I DIDN'T CALL YOU HERE TO *REPRIMAND* YOU--

NO? THEN WE CAN GO?

NOT JUST YET. TRY NOT TO GET *TOO* EXCITED, BOYS-- I'VE GOT *GOOD NEWS*.

BUT I SHOULDN'T BE THE ONE TO BREAK IT TO YOU. NOT WHEN *HE* CAN.

HE? WHO'S *HE*--?

HELLO, CHILDREN.

THEY TOOK IT SURPRISINGLY *WELL*, DON'T YOU THINK?

ALL THINGS CONSIDERED. BUT THEY STILL HAVE *MUCH* TO LEARN.

TZ

THREE DAYS LATER...

AND *THAT*, DEAR FATHER, IS THE *TRUTH*

WHEN WE RETURNED TO OUR ROOM IN MALICE, ONLY TO FIND YOUR BODY *MISSING*, WE DID NOT KNOW *WHAT* TO *DO!*

LATER, THE CHINESE SOLDIERS RETURNED THE BODY TO OUR CARE--BUT EVEN *THEN* YOUR FINGER--WITH THE *FIRE OPAL*--WAS *GONE*.

IT WAS NOT UNTIL YOUR BODY WAS STOLEN BY THE MEN IN THE HELICOPTERS THAT WE HAD EVEN A *CLUE* TO *WHO* MIGHT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE THEFT!

CASH MACH

FREE MONEY.

THE COMPUTERS STILL SEARCH FOR REFERENCES TO THE WORD "*DRILL*" AS IT WAS INSCRIBED ON THE SIDES OF THE COPTERS...

TS

STOP HERE.

WHEN YOU FIND OUT WHAT IT MEANS, MY FIRST ORDER OF BUSINESS WILL BE TO GET THE RING. THE FIRE OPAL IS THE SOURCE OF MY POWER--

--WITHOUT IT, I AM LESS THAN HALF A MAN...

SPEAKING OF WHICH, FATHER-- RUDRA HAS TOLD US OF YOUR RELUCTANCE TO UNDERGO THE CYBERNETIC TRANSFER.

WHY DO YOU HESITATE? IS NOT A *MECHANICAL* BODY PREFERABLE TO NO BODY AT ALL?

CALL ME *OLD-FASHIONED*... BUT I'VE ALWAYS PREFERRED *FLESH* AND *BONES* TO *NUTS* AND *BOLTS*...

...AND I CAN AFFORD TO *WAIT* AN EXTRA FEW DAYS TO GET IT.

WHAT LITTLE REMAINS OF MY BODY COULD *USE* A BIT OF A REST. THE WAR ON CRIME CAN BE DELAYED FOR A SHORT WHILE.

DON'T BOTHER WRAPPING IT.

FOR NOW, I'M CONTENT TO SHARE A FEW FINAL MOMENTS WITH MY SONS, BEFORE I RETURN TO THE WEST...

WE HAVE BEEN MEANING TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT THAT, FATHER...

OPEN

YES. RATHER THAN UNDERGO PALADIN TRAINING WE WOULD PREFER TO ACCOMPANY YOU.

WE HAVE MADE MANY *FRIENDS* IN NEW YORK AND BELIEVE WE HAVE *EXCELLED* AT OUR APPOINTED ROLES OF PALADINS-IN--TRAINING...

CAN YOU LOOK ME IN THE *FACE* AND SAY THAT?

YES--BUT ONLY BECAUSE THERE ARE NO *OTHER* PLACES *TO* LOOK.

MY POINT EXACTLY.

NO, MY SONS. YOU WILL REMAIN HERE AND UNDERGO THE FULL REGIMEN OF THE PALADIN. PERHAPS SOME DAY YOU WILL JOIN ME IN THE WAR. BUT UNTIL THEN--

--SHAMBALA IS WHERE YOU WILL STAY. AND NOW THAT *THAT'S* SETTLED...

"LET'S CHECK UP ON THAT BAND OF *WAIFS* YOU BROUGHT WITH YOU..."

NUMBER *THIRTEEN*-- STEP FORWARD.

ACCORDING TO OUR INFORMATION, YOU'VE EXPRESSED AN INTEREST IN... LET'S SEE HERE... AH...

"FAST CARS," AND...HMMM... "LOOSE WOMEN."

WE LEAVE YOU TO SEEK OUT THE *LATTER* YOURSELF. AS FOR THE FORMER, WE ARE PLACING YOU IN THE CUSTODY OF THE FONGS.

MISTER FONG IS SHAMBALA'S FOREMOST HOVERCAR MECHANIC. HE WILL TEACH YOU ALL HE KNOWS.

RAD! UM... I MEAN-- THANK YOU, ELDER.

NUMBER FOURTEEN-- STEP FORWARD.

THE WISDOM OF *SOLOMON*, MY SONS...COMBINED WITH A *WORLDLINESS* ONLY IMMORTALITY CAN TEACH.

IT IS MY GREATEST PLEASURE TO OBSERVE THE COUNCIL... THEIR JUDGMENT HAS KEPT HARMONY FOR MORE THAN A MILLENNIUM...

PERSONALLY, *WE* WOULD RATHER ASK DOCTOR *RUTH*...

I WILL FORGIVE YOUR *INSOLENCE* THIS TIME, HSU...BUT YOUR FRUSTRATION IS MISPLACED. I ALONE DECIDED THAT YOU REMAIN IN SHAMBALA. BLAME *ME* -- OR YOURSELVES.

BUT PAY THE ELDERS HEED, MY SONS. THEIR SENSE OF JUSTICE IS INSPIRATIONAL. NO DILEMMA IS TOO PERPLEXING...NO QUANDARY TOO COMPLEX FOR THEM TO--

UMM... I BELIEVE WE HAVE A PROBLEM HERE...

HE IS THE LAST ONE. ALL THE OTHERS HAVE BEEN PLACED.

BUT WHAT DOES THIS *MEAN*-- "PARTYING TILL DAWN" AND "BUSTING HEAD"...?

CHILD--THIS IS *HARDLY* SOCIALLY ACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOR...

IT'S WHAT I *DO*, MAN. TAKE IT OR LEAVE IT.

IT APPEARS THE ELDERS HAVE MET THEIR MATCH WITH BART, EH, FATHER...?

HMMM... PERHAPS-- BUT IF I COULD HARNESS HIS *ARROGANCE*...

YOU, FATHER...?

WHY NOT, *CHANG*...?

"...YOU KNOW HOW MUCH I LIKE *CHILDREN*..."

SHE IS *BEAUTIFUL*, IS SHE NOT...?

TRULY. AND THANKS TO THE ELDERS, SHE IS *OURS*.

OOOHH...

WILLA JUNE! BE *CAREFUL*! YOU WILL HURT--

LET THE CHILD *BE*, HUSBAND! SHE WILL NOT BREAK! CHILDREN ARE REMARKABLY *DURABLE*..

--OUR *MANUAL* SAYS SO!

IT'S THE BIGGEST I EVER--

--SAW...

WELL, WELL... LOOKY HERE.

WILLA JUNE... YOU BEEN A *BAAD* LITTLE GIRL...

WILLA JUNE? WHERE DID SHE GO?

WILLA JUNE! ANSWER US! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

CHARGE!

GUILTY! GUILTY! GUILTY!

WAAAUGH!

GET 'EM! BUT TRY NOT TO KILL THE *KIDS!*

WE'LL NEED *THEM* FOR *LATER!*

BLAM BLAM BLAM BLAM

FIGHT ON, COMRADES--

BWOOM

--BY NIGHTFALL, *NEW MALICE* WILL BE *OURS!*

YEEEEE-- HAAAA!

HURK

PLOOO

CRACK

BANG! POW BANG POW BANG BANG POW BANG POW BANG POW BANG

BOOM

SPLAT

AAAEE

AAGH

NOOO

GLURK

FATHER! SHOOTING IN THE STREETS!

AND THOSE *SCREAMS*-- IT SOUNDS LIKE A *MASSACRE!*

SO IT DOES. YOU TWO REMAIN HERE. I'LL DEAL WITH--

FATHER-- YOU CANNOT --NOT WITH YOUR CURRENT... HANDICAP.

TRUE. IT *MIGHT* PUT ME AT A *DISADVANTAGE.*

BUT IF THE STREETS OF SHAMBALA RUN RED WITH BLOOD...IT WILL BE AT *MY* HAND.

COME, MY SONS. IT'S TIME TO SEE *RUDRA.*

LIKE SHOOTIN' FISH IN A *BARREL!* YOU THINK THAT'S *ALL* OF 'EM?

NO. WE SAW MANY MORE CITIZENS WHEN WE OBSERVED THEM EARLIER. THEY MUST BE HIDING.

SO? WHAT'S NEXT?

WE HAVE A CHOICE. WE CAN FERRET THEM OUT ONE BY ONE, OR SAP THEIR *WILL* BY KILLING THEIR LEADERS AND INSTITUTING OUR OWN GOVERNMENT.

AS FORMER K.G.B. AGENT. BOTH PROSPECTS HAVE EQUAL APPEAL.

CLAK

THE SECOND SOUNDS *EASIER*-- *IF* WE CAN FIND OUT WHERE THEIR LEADERS ARE HIDING OUT!

I BELIEVE THEY ARE--

--THERE--??

WHAT IS *THIS?* THEY SEND *BLINDFOLDED* MEN TO COMBAT US?

WRONG, INTRUDERS! WE ARE PALADINS OF SHAMBALA -- THE GREATEST LIVING WEAPONS EVER TO BE UNLEASHED UPON THIS EARTH.

YOU HAVE VIOLATED THE PEACE OF OUR HOMELAND, AND BY THE POWER OF THE SHADOW WARRIORS, YOU SHALL PAY DEARLY!

HAH!

HEEEEEEE

YRRRFGGG

BUDDA BUDDA B

SHADOW WARRIORS, MY ASS.

THANK THE ELDERS! YOU MADE IT!

I'VE MADE MY DECISION, BUDRA. HOW SOON CAN WE MAKE THE TRANSFER?

RIGHT NOW. EVERYTHING'S READY. I WAS EXPECTING YOU.

WE'VE GOT TO HURRY. THERE ISN'T MUCH TIME.

EEESHH... I *WISH* SHE WOULD NOT *DO* THAT...

BUDRA BUDRA BUDDA BUDDA BUDRA

THERE IS NO TIME FOR *FORMALITIES, HSU*-- NOT WHEN--

HSU--LOOK! THEY HAVE KILLED THE *PALADINS*! AND NOW THEY HEAD TOWARD THE *COUNCIL* BUILDING! THEY MUST MEAN TO TAKE THE *ELDERS*!

TERRIBLE... SIMPLY TERRIBLE. BUT TELL ME, CHANG-- THE INVADERS -- DO THEY NOT SEEM SOMEHOW *FAMILIAR*?

IT'S *THEM*-- THE PEOPLE OF *MALICE*! THEY MUST HAVE FOLLOWED US! WE--WE HAVE *LED* THEM HERE!

THE *MURDER*... THE *CARNAGE*... IT IS ALL BECAUSE OF *US*!

NOW, NOW, CHANG. LET US NOT *OVERSTATE* THIS. THEY *PROBABLY* WOULD HAVE DISCOVERED SHAMBALA EVENTUALLY--EVEN WITHOUT US.

HSU--HOW CAN YOU *SAY* THAT?! WE ARE NOTHING LESS THAN *MASS MURDERERS*! WE MUST AVENGE THE DEAD -- GO DOWN THERE AND *FIGHT THEM*--

--SAVE WHAT REMAINS OF OUR HOMELAND BEFORE THEY DESTROY IT!

THAT IS NOT *YOU* TALKING, CHANG--IT IS THE *GUILT*! BREATHE DEEPLY-- IT WILL PASS.

LOOK AT IT *REALISTICALLY*. WHAT CAN *WE TWO* DO-- WHEN EVEN THE PALADINS COULD DO NOTHING TO STOP THEM?

NO, CHANG. WE MUST PUT OUR MISTAKES BEHIND US, HOWEVER GREAT THEY MAY BE. WE OWE IT TO OUR PEOPLE TO SURVIVE THIS ORDEAL. TO PERPETUATE OUR RACE. TO LIVE ON...

--TO HIDE?

IN A WORD... YES.

NO! I CAN BEAR THE GUILT *NO LONGER*! IF I MUST *DIE FIGHTING*, SO BE IT! BUT I WILL NOT WATCH AS OUR PEOPLE SUFFER FOR OUR *STUPIDITY*! I--

YOU'LL STAY RIGHT HERE... BOTH OF YOU.

THIS WILL ONLY TAKE A MINUTE

BOOM

THIS LOOKS LIKE THE PLACE!

AND *THAT* MUST BE *THEM!*

MUST BE-- THEY'RE THE ONLY GUYS THAT LOOK OLD ENOUGH TO BE IN CHARGE!

WHAT IS THE *MEANING* OF THIS?! YOU CAN'T COME IN HERE WITH *WEAPONS!* DON'T YOU KNOW WHERE YOU *ARE*?!

CALL THE PALADINS! GET THESE *INFIDELS*--

TAKE THEM-- *NOW!*

ARRRGHHHH

BUDDA BUDDA BADDA

GET READY TO DIE, OLD MAN...

MAYBE I'LL CRACK THEIR HEADS TOGETHER, EH?

MAKE US SOME *BREAKFAST*...

WAIT! KILLING THEM *HERE* SERVES LITTLE PURPOSE! WE MUST *MILK* THE MOMENT OF *ALL* ITS DRAMA!

TAKE THEM *OUTSIDE* -- WE WILL DO IT IN FRONT OF THEIR SUBJECTS! WHEN THEY WITNESS THEIR LEADERS' *EXECUTIONS*, IT WILL DESTROY ALL *HOPE* OF RESIST--

¡HAHAHAHAHAHAH

HAHAHAHAHAH

YOU HAVE TAKEN THE LIVES OF *INNOCENTS*, SCUM...

...AND *MURDERED* THE GREATEST FORCE FOR JUSTICE MANKIND HAS EVER KNOWN.

YOU'VE DEFILED THE SANCTITY OF THIS HOLY PLACE... BROUGHT *WEAPONS* INTO A HOUSE THAT FORBIDS THEM.

FOR *ALL THAT* AND *MORE*...

PING

PING

...I CONDEMN YOUR SOULS TO *HELL!*

THINK *TWICE*, ROBOT MAN--

--UNLESS YOU THINK THESE *GEEKS* ARE GOIN' SOMEPLACE *DIFFERENT*.

NOW BACK OFF.

YOU HEAR ME, ROBOT MAN?

I SAID, BACK O--

.33.322

DON'T KNOW WHAT THEY *MEAN*... BUT THEY MUST DO *SOMETHING*...

TING

.6.296

CHOOSE ONE FROM THE MENU

PULSE CONCUSSION FLASHER CONFLAG TERMINUS

OR BLINK FOR NEXT MENU

KRUUM

KRUUM

HEADS UP.

FSSSSHHH

GOOD. THEY'RE SAFE.

NOW LET'S SEE WHAT ELSE THIS BODY CAN DO.

BADOOM

EH?

AWRIGHT! I SACKED THAT SUCKER! SACKED HIM GOOD!

NICE JOB, LONNIE.

YOU GET YOUR PICK OF THE BABES FOR *THAT* HIT!

DAMN *RIGHT* I WILL! MAN DIDN'T KNOW WHO HE WAS MESSIN' WITH! BLEW HIS TIN BUTT RIGHT OUTTA THE PARK!

WRONG.

YOU STRUCK OUT.

AW, HELL--

.322

TING

+40333.56.298

CHOOSE ONE FROM THE MENU

PULSE CONCUSSION FLASHER CONFLAG TERMINUS

OR BLINK FOR NEXT MENU

NOW WHAT?

RRRRRRR

BARROOM

NOT BAD. NOT BAD AT ALL.

NEXT.

TING

+40333.56.298

CHOOSE ONE FROM THE MENU

PULSE CONCUSSION FLASHER CONFLAG TERMINUS

OR BLINK FOR NEXT MENU

BUDDA BUDDA BUDDA BUDDA BUDDA BUDDA

HMMM... I DO BELIEVE I COULD GROW TO ACTUALLY *ENJOY* THIS SITUATION... PERHAPS *NEW YORK* IS READY FOR A *ROBO--*

PING

WHO--?

GUILTY! *GUILTY!* *GUILTY!*

KILL HIM! *KILL HIM!*

KILL--

SAVE THE *BEST*... FOR *LAST*. I THINK.

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CHOOSE ONE FROM THE MENU

PULSE CONCUSSION FLASHER CONFLAG TERMINUS

OR BLINK FOR NEXT MENU

SHTOK SHTNK

HMMM...

KLUNK UNK

NOW WHAT THE HELL KIND OF STUNT IS *THIS?*

A *DECOY*, PERHAPS? IT REMINDS ME OF A STRATEGY I ONCE ENCOUNTERED IN *AFGHANISTAN*...

AFGHANISTAN?!! WHAT THE HELL YOU *TALKIN'* ABOUT?!

THAT *AIN'T* NO *DECOY!* *IT'S* A--

--BOMB?

SHIT, YES, IT--

BLOOM

WOW. RADICAL!!

WHAT A MESS...

FATHER... HE'S DEAD!

BUT HE DIED FOR *US*, CHILD. BY SAVING *OUR* LIVES, HE BALANCED THE *SINS* YOU TWO COMMITTED.

YOU MEAN--YOU *KNEW*?

OF COURSE, CHILD. WE ARE THE *ELDERS* OF SHAMBALA. WE KNOW *EVERYTHING*.

BESIDES-- YOU BOTH TALK IN YOUR SLEEP.

NOW COME, CHILDREN. YOUR FATHER MAY BE *GONE*...

BUT YOU ARE STILL *YOUNG*... AND HAVE *MUCH* LIVING TO DO...

AHEM.

EASY, LADIES...EASY. WE DON'T WANT TO *STRIP* THE *FINISH* NOW, DO WE...?

OH, NO, YING KO!

ABSOLUTELY *NOT!*

THEN CONTINUE--CAREFULLY. THIS TUNE-UP WILL HAVE TO LAST UNTIL MY NEW BODY IS READY...AND I WANT TO BE *SPARKLING* FOR MY *NEW YORK DEBUT.*

FATHER...?

AH! MY SONS! HAVE YOU RETRIEVED THE INFORMATION I DESIRED?

YES, FATHER. THE HELICOPTER THAT ABDUCTED YOU WAS OWNED BY *RAPIDAIR, INC.* THEIR ENTIRE FLEET IS CURRENTLY BEING LEASED FOR AN INTERNATIONAL ROCK MUSIC TOUR.

AND THE NAME OF THE BAND--

DRILL. OF COURSE.

THEN SOMEONE *INSIDE* THAT ORGANIZATION--PERHAPS ONE OF THE BAND MEMBERS THEMSELVES--IS IN POSSESSION OF *BOTH* MY RING *AND* MY TORSO.

THE LATTER IS REPLACEABLE. THE FORMER IS *NOT.*

I MUST KNOW *MORE*... AND I *WILL*...ONCE I RETURN TO THE WEST. GOOD WORK, MY SONS.

YOU REALLY THINK SO?

YOU *KNOW* ME, *HSU.* I *NEVER* LIE.

THAT IS GOOD--BECAUSE WE WOULD BOTH BE MORE THAN *HAPPY* TO DO THE *SAME* GOOD WORKS FOR YOU BACK IN NEW YORK.

IF YOU WOULD ONLY *TAKE US* WITH YOU--

--PLEASE?

NO. I'M AFRAID MY EARLIER DECISION WAS FINAL--AND THE *RIGHTNESS* OF IT IS MORE OBVIOUS NOW THAN EVER BEFORE.

MANY OF THE PALADINS DIED AT THE HANDS OF THOSE SAVAGES. SHAMBALA WILL NEED TO REPLENISH THE STOCK--YOU WILL BE THE FIRST OF THE *NEW BREED.*

MAKE ME *PROUD* OF YOU, MY SONS. I AM DEPENDING ON YOU.

BUT, *FATHER*-- *SURELY* IT WAS YOUR INTENTION TO BRING *SOME* PALADINS BACK WITH YOU...? YOU SAID SO YOURSELF!

AND SINCE THERE ARE *NO OTHERS* WORTHY OF THE HONOR--

YOU PRESUME FAR TOO MUCH, MY SONS.

TRUE, THERE ARE NO OTHER FULLY REALIZED PALADINS AVAILABLE...BUT THERE ARE *SOME* THAT MAY ADAPT TO THE RIGORS OF WAR ON CRIME FAR MORE EASILY THAN OTHERS...

BART TREMAIN--?

ALL SET, BOSS. MISTER FONG ADJUSTED THE ANTI-GRAV GAUGE FOR YOUR EXTRA WEIGHT...THIS BABY IS READY TO ROLL.

VERY GOOD BART. ARE YOU READY TO DEPART?

WHEN YOU ARE, BOSS.

HIM?! BUT-- HE'S AN *INCORRIGIBLE*--

PRONE TO FITS OF UNCONTROLLABLE *VIOLENCE*--

--AN *UNHOLY TERROR!*

I *KNEW* YOU WOULD UNDERSTAND.

BUT-- BUT--

WELL, MY SONS. THE WAR ON CRIME AWAITS.

I'D SAY I WOULD *WAITE*... BUT AS YOU BOTH KNOW, THERE ARE NO POST OFFICES IN SHAMBALA. SO UNTIL NEXT WE MEET...

...FAREWELL...

LATER, DUDES.

DEPILOGUE

IT-- IT'S AMAZING...

I AM GLAD YOU LIKE IT, SIR.

LIKE IT?! IT IS THE MOST REMARKABLE THING I HAVE EVER SEEN.

INDEED, SIR. I AM QUITE PROUD OF IT. THERE IS BUT ONE OTHER LIKE IT IN THE ENTIRE WORLD.

ANOTHER?!

BUT DO NOT LET IT CONCERN YOU, SIR. IT IS HALF A WORLD AWAY... AND IN THE POSSESSION OF INDIVIDUALS WHO WOULD NEVER DEIGN TO USE IT.

ARE YOU CERTAIN?

OH, ABSOLUTELY, SIR. THEIR REFUSAL TO EVEN CONSIDER ITS POTENTIAL WAS, IN PART, THE REASON I LEFT THEIR... AHH... EMPLOY IN THE FIRST PLACE.

I SEE... BUT YOU UNDERSTAND, I NEVER DEAL WITH NONEXCLUSIVE RIGHTS SITUATIONS. COMPANY POLICY.

SIR-- IF YOU WANT ME TO DISCONNECT YOU, I CAN--

NO, NO... NO NEED FOR THAT. IN TIME, WE SHALL DEAL WITH THE PROBLEM. FOR NOW, ALL THAT CONCERNS ME IS THE TREMENDOUS POWER THAT I FEEL!

IT IS GOOD, YES?

GOOD? IT'S INVIGORATING! MORE THAN I COULD HAVE DREAMED OF!

BUT TELL ME, DOCTOR. THE CONTROL SCREENS I SEE BEFORE MY EYES-- THE ONES WITH THE FUNCTION BUTTONS? IF I WERE TO DIRECT MY ATTENTION TO ONE--

NO-- WAIT! DON'T--

BWOOM

AMAZING. SIMPLY AMAZING.

REALLY, MISTER KHAN... IF YOU INTEND TO MASTER YOUR NEW BODY, YOU WILL *HAVE* TO LISTEN TO ME WHEN I--

YES... YES... *CERTAINLY* I WILL LISTEN... AND I WILL LEARN.

AND IN THE *MEANTIME*... PLEASE, DOCTOR--

CALL ME *SHIWAN*...

The Annuals

ANNUAL #1

cover art by HOWARD CHAYKIN

JULY 1, 1946.

THE SOUTH PACIFIC OCEAN.

FIFTY MILES NORTH OF THE BIKINI ATOLL ISLANDS.

AW, LINC-- IT AIN'T THAT BAD...

FOR YOU, MAYBE, JERRY--BUT ME...

HEY--I'M IN IT FOR THE BUCKS.

OH, YEAH--BIG BUCKS, EH, LINC-- WHATAYA GETTIN'-- LIKE NINETY A MONTH?

IT'S ENOUGH, JERRY-- ENOUGH FOR ME TO SIGN ON FOR THIS EXTRA TOUR, NOW THAT THE RATZIES 'N' JAPS ARE JUST A BAD MEMORY--

ENOUGH FOR ME TO GET BACK HOME TO MY WIFE JUNE IN A COUPLE OF WEEKS AND START A FAMILY...

YESSIR, JER--ONCE OLD UNCLE SAM GETS DONE WHACKIN' HIS ATOMS TOGETHER OUT HERE, I'M HEADIN' BACK TO MY BABY--

YEAH, LINC-- SURE NOW--

AAAAOOOGGAAA

-- WE BETTER BE GETTIN' INSIDE... TEST'S SET TO BEGIN!

WE GOT PLENTY OF TIME, BUDDY-- AT LEAST ENOUGH FOR A QUICK SMOKE...

DON'T THINK SO, LINC-- ROUND HERE, THE TOP BRASS DO EVERYTHING RIGHT ON SCHEDULE--

LET'S GO! EVERYONE TAKE COVER!

AWRIGHT, AWRIGHT! JUST HOLD YOUR WATER, CAPTAIN!

I'M COM--

FRAGMENT OF THE SUN

STORY: ANDREW HELFER * PENCILS: JOE ORLANDO * INKS: ALFREDO ALCALA
LETTERS: ALBERT DE GUZMAN * COLORS: JOE ORLANDO * EDITOR: MIKE CARLIN







BROOKLYN, NEW YORK.

JULY 5, 1946.

I NEED A NEW JOB...

GUESS IT COULD BE WORSE... I COULD HAVE BEEN THE EXECUTIONER...

STILL, THIS COMES IN A CLOSE SECOND.

WELL-- HERE GOES.

MRS. JUNE BRUNDLE?

YES... WHAT CAN I DO FOR--

IT IS MY SAD DUTY TO INFORM YOU THAT YOUR HUSBAND LINCOLN IS *BELIEVED* TO BE DEAD--

REPORTED MISSING AFTER SOME *ACTIVITY* OF A *CLASSIFIED* NATURE IN THE *SOUTH PACIFIC*--

THE *NAVY* WILL *TRANSFER* ALL BENEFITS TO YOU-- IF THERE IS ANYTHING ELSE WE CAN DO--

NO... I-- I'LL BE FINE.

I HAVE MANY-- FRIENDS. GOOD DAY, SIR...

JUNE? WHAT IS IT--?

IT'S LINCOLN -- THE LORD'S SEEN FIT TO TAKE HIM FROM ME--

OH, YOU *POOR DEAR!*

WE SHOULD--

YES! PRAY FOR HIM -- *PRAY* FOR HIS *SOUL*--

AND *REJOICE*, JUNE--

I *WILL*, BROTHER JOSEPH!

FOR WHATEVER *FATE* ONCE BEFELL HIM--

"--HE'S IN THE LORD'S HANDS NOW!"

WH-WHERE THE H-HELL AM I?

SOMETHING STRANGE ABOUT THIS--EVERYTHING'S SO... STILL--SO QUIET...

SO TIRED... NEED W-WATER-- FRESH--

MEAT!

RRGHHH... GRRRRRRHHHH...

TASTES ALMOST COOKED--LIKE IT BURNED TO DEATH--

TASTES GOOD--BUT-- SOMETHING'S MOVING--IN MY--

PHAGGGHHHH--

MAGGOTS!!

CAN'T EAT DEAD MEAT--

BUT THERE'S SOME FRESH RACK OF LAMB RIGHT THERE!

COME TO POPPA, LITTLE BABY--

--JUST HOLD THAT POSE AND--

BAAAAAAA.

BAAAAAAA.

WHAT TH--

TIMES SQUARE. OCTOBER 1946.

IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE WITH JAMES STEWART DONNA REED ONEL BARRYMORE

IT'S A WONDER WITH JAMES STEWART, D LIONEL BARRY

PREPARE YE THE WAY FOR THE *LORD!* READ OF THE *COMING NEW ORDER!*

CRIPES! WHAT A *SAPPY* PICTURE!

NOVELTIES

NOW PLAYING

FREE DISHES WITH EVERY SHOW!

EXCUSE ME--BUT HAVE YOU HEARD THE *GOOD NEWS,* SIR?

YANKEES TAKE THE *PENNANT* AGAIN? HAD A *SAWBUCK* RIDIN' ON 'EM--

NO, NO--THE NEWS OF THE *SECOND COMING!*

HERE--READ THIS PAMPHLET AND LEARN THE EVERLASTING *TRUTH!*

WHATTA BUNCH OF *MUMBO-JUMBO...*

BUT THIS GUY... JULIUS *STRAIT...* LOOKS AWFUL FAMILIAR...

JULIUS

REMEMBER HIM FROM *SOMEWHERE*-- BUT *NOT* THE *PULPIT...*

SAY, SWEETHEART--YOU GOT A NAME?

TOP INVAZIS

BRUNDLE, MISTER--JUNE BRUNDLE. BUT WHY--?

WANTED TO ASK WHAT YOU KNOW ABOUT THIS STRAIT JOE--

MR. STRAIT? HIS LIFE IS AN OPEN BOOK TO US--A TESTAMENT TO THE *GLORY* OF *SALVATION* AND--

BA-WHOOOM!

AN EXPLOSION IN THE *THEATER*-- AND THAT *TELETYPE* 'ROUND THE TIMES BUILDING--

--WHAT THE *HELL*--?

BING CROSBY INGRID B BELLS OF ST. MARY'S

PLEASE, SIR--YOU *BLASPHEME!*

ACHT UND ACH

BLASPHEME, MY *BUTT*, LADY-- THAT WAS A *BOMB* EXPLODED BACK THERE! AND I BET WHOEVER PLANTED *IT*--

--*ALSO* PLANTED THAT *TELETYPE MESSAGE* UP THERE!

THE OFFICES OF *JULIUS STRAIT*, SPIRITUAL LEADER OF *SECOND COMING MINISTRIES*...

GENTLEMEN, WE HAVE A PROBLEM.

YEARS AGO, WHEN I WAS A STRUGGLING *SCIENCE FICTION* WRITER, I HAPPENED UPON THE *PERFECT* ROUTE TO FAME AND FORTUNE.

INSTEAD OF WASTING AWAY MY LIFE AT A PENNY A WORD, I WOULD DO WHAT ONLY A *HANDFUL* OF MEN BEFORE ME HAD SUCCEEDED AT.

I WOULD START A *RELIGION*-- BUT I WOULD PROMISE MY FOLLOWERS *ONE THING* THAT NO OTHER COULD--A *PAYOFF*.

MY MESSIAH WOULD RETURN, IN OUR LIFETIMES--I *GUARANTEED IT*. I EVEN WENT SO FAR AS TO *PROCLAIM* AN EXACT TIME AND DATE.

THAT DATE IS FAST UPON US, GENTLEMEN--AND WE HAVE *NOTHING* IN THE WAY OF A *MESSIAH* TO SHOW FOR IT.

I ADMIT, I MADE SOME...AH...*STRATEGIC* MISTAKES. BUT I RECOGNIZED *THAT YEARS* AGO--

--AND SO, I SPENT *MUCH* TIME AND *MONEY* ATTEMPTING TO *MANUFACTURE* A SUITABLE *MESSIAH*

I HAVE FAILED. THE *MIRACLE OPERATION* OF THE DECADE--THE *PRE-FRONTAL LOBOTOMY*, PROMISED TO OFFER ITS RECIPIENTS A *SAINTLIKE* SERENITY--

--A SERENITY I BELIEVED WE COULD *USE* TO OUR ADVANTAGE...

BUT OUR NUMEROUS *EXPERIMENTS* HAVE ONLY PRODUCED A SUCCESSION OF *DROOLING DULLARDS*...

NOW MY FOLLOWERS WAIT-- AND WHEN THE FORETOLD MOMENT PASSES, MANY WILL DOUBTLESS BECOME *DISILLUSIONED* AND LEAVE THE *FOLD*.

WE ESTIMATE THE *EXPECTATIONAL FALLOUT* AT 40 PERCENT--BUT WE WILL *CONTINUE* IN OUR WORK, GENTLEMEN--

--AND WE *MUST* MAKE CERTAIN THIS *NEVER HAPPENS AGAIN*!

TIMES *CHANGE*, GENTLEMEN-- THINGS ARE NOT AS *SIMPLE* AS *BEFORE* THE WAR! PEOPLE NEED MORE *COMPELLING* REASONS TO BELIEVE IN OUR CAUSE!

TO THIS END, LET ME INTRODUCE DR. HANS STURM-- NOTED GERMAN PSYCHOLOGIST, AND FOUNDER OF THE *MOTIVATIONAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE*--

DANKA, HERR STRAIT--

AT *ZEE* MOTIVATION RESEARCH INSTITUTE, VEE ARE DEVOTED TO ZEE EFFECTIVE MANIPULATION OF TODAY'S CONSUMER THROUGH MODERN MARKETING AND ADVERTISING TECHNIQUES!

ZEE PROBLEM HERE ISS A ZIMPLE ONE, MEIN HERREN -- BUT, LIKE ALL THINGS IN ZIS NEW *CONSUMERIST* AGE, *MARKETING* ISS ZEE *KEY*!

TODAY, ZEE *LOBOTOMY* PROCESS HASS FALLEN INTO *DISFAVOR* AMONG ZEE PUBLIC--

--BUT IN ANCIENT *ROME*, ZEE MENTALLY *INCOMPETENT* VERE *OFTEN* THOUGHT TO BE ZEE *CHILDREN OF GOD*! ZEY VERE *REVERED*, NOT *SHUNNED*!

ZO, VAT VEE HAFF HERE IS ZEE *CORRECT* IDEA, FOR ZE *WRONG* ERA!

VEE ARE AT ZEE *THRESHOLD* OF A *NEW* ERA, MEIN HERREN -- ZE *ATOMIC ERA*!

UND ZO, IF VEE ARE TO *CREATE* A *NEW* MESSIAH, HE MUST BE FRESH, CONTEMPORARY, UND REFLECTIVE OF ZIS NEW AGE WE ARE ENTERING!

IN *SHORT*, GENTLEMEN, HE MUST BE--

--AN *ATOMIC MAN*!

IF VEE ARE TO *PROCEED* IN ZIS COURSE, VEE MUST BEGIN *TODAY*! THROUGH MY CONTACTS AT ZEE *STATE DEPARTMENT* I HAF LEARNED OF A *MAN*--

--A *SURVIVOR* FOUND ON A *RADIOACTIVE* ISLAND DAYS AGO!

HIS WIFE ISS A MEMBER OF ZIS MINISTRY! IF *VEE* WERE TO *REUNITE* THE TWO--

--THINK OF *ZEE OFFSPRING* OF SUCH A UNION!

THE ENERGY OF *ZEE UNIVERSE*-- HARNESSED BY ZIS *CHILD OF ZEE SUN*--

"--NOW, ZAT WOULD BE A GOD GUARANTEED TO TAKE ZEE WORLD BY STORM!!"

ZO, HERR MACMILLIAN-- IT HAS ALL BEEN ARRANGED?

YES, MR. STURM-- THOUGH IT WEREN'T EASY...

MOST OF THE BOYS'RE SPOOKED BY THAT BRUNDLE FELLA--

-- CAN'T SAY HE'S THE PICTURE OF HEALTH!

STILL, SINCE YOU SAY IT'S FOR THE GOOD OF THE BUND...

"I'LL BE PICKIN' MRS. BRUNDLE UP MYSELF TONIGHT..."

I STILL CAN'T BELIEVE HE'S ALIVE...

...AND THIS THING YOU WANT ME TO DO... HOW CAN I--

I JUST KNOW MR. STRAIT SAYS IT'S WHAT YOU GOTTA DO...

HOSPITAL

IT'S ONE OF HIS VISIONS, Y'SEE... FROM HIGH UP AN' ALL...

BUT... I CAN'T... I MEAN-- I LOVE HIM SO--

HOSPITAL ZONE QUIET

--BUT HERE, IN THIS... PLACE... WITH THE SMELL OF THE DYING... I COULDN'T--

YOU HAVE TO, MRS. BRUNDLE--

DANGER! STOP! ONLY AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL ALLOWED BEYOND THIS POINT

--JUST TRY TO THINK OF IT AS THE LORD'S WORK...

KEEP OUT

L-LINCOLN-- IS THAT YOU--?

OH, DEAR LORD-- LINCOLN! WHAT HAVE THEY DONE TO YOU!?

:NGGH: JUNE...

GOWAY :NGGGH: SICKK... DON' WAN YOU T'SEE :NARGGH: ME LIKE THISSSS...

I-I CAN'T, MY LOVE... IT'S THE LORD'S WILL...

JUNE... YOU :NURGGL: CAN'T BELIEVE... THAT...

'S ALL MYOWN... :KAKK: FAULT... STUPIDDD ME...

NOW :GLAKK: I... I... DYING, JUNE... I'LL MISS YOU... AN' :NGGGH: THE BABY WE NEVUH...

NO, LINCOLN--YOU CAN'T LEAVE W-WITHOUT GIVING ME THAT--

I-IT'S BEEN ORDAINED--

WE'RE HIS VESSELS, LINCOLN--FROM THIS SICKNESS, HIS GLORY WILL SPRING FORTH!

BELIEVE, LINCOLN--

--THIS IS OUR DESTINY!

NOOOOO--!

ACHT UND ACHT

CLYDE, OLD BOY--THIS IS THE SICKEST ONE YET!

BUT IT ALL FITS TOGETHER NOW...

ALL THESE KILLINGS-- HERE AND IN GERMANY-- AND ALL OF 'EM WITH THAT ACHT UND ACHT SIGNATURE LEFT BEHIND ONE WAY OR ANOTHER...

THE NUREMBERG TRIALS ARE OVER--A BUNCH OF TOP NAZIS ARE SET TO HANG TOMORROW--

AND SINCE "ACHT" IS EIGHT IN GERMAN--AND THE EIGHTH LETTER OF THE ALPHABET IS "H"--

Y'JUST DOUBLE IT T'GET "HH"--

--OR "HEIL HITLER!"

THE MASTER IS GONNA WANNA KNOW ABOUT THIS!

NO, BURBANK--I *CAN'T* FILL YOU IN ON THE *DETAILS*--I DON'T *KNOW* ANY!

ALL I *DO* KNOW IS THAT THERE'S SOME KINDA *INTERNATIONAL CONSPIRACY* GOING ON OUT THERE!

C'MON, *CLYDE*--WE ALL *KNOW* ABOUT YOU AND THAT PAPER YOU WORK FOR! I MEAN, IF THIS IS ANOTHER ONE OF THOSE HARE-BRAINED *ALIEN INVASION* STORIES...

NO WAY, BURB--I SEEN THE *PICTURES*! BELIEVE ME, THIS AIN'T NO *CIRCULATION GIMMICK*!

I CAN'T BE *SURE*, BUT I'D *BET* THIS RASH OF TERRORIST ACTIVITY IS THE REMAINING NAZIS' WAY OF TELLIN' US TO LET THEIR *CONDEMNED* BUDDIES GO *FREE*--

--OR *ELSE*!!

BUT THEIR *TIME'S* RUNNIN' OUT! THE *TOP NAZIS* ARE SCHEDULED TO *HANG* IN *TWO DAYS*--

--AN' I GOT A FEELIN' THAT *TOMORROW NIGHT'S* GONNA BE THEIR *MAIN EVENT*!

AWRIGHT, CLYDE--YOU JUST *SIT TIGHT*... I'LL GET THE MESSAGE TO THE *MASTER*--

--IF ANYTHING HAPPENS--*WE'LL* BE READY!

THE NEXT DAY--8 PM--THE BRONX-BOUND "D" TRAIN...

OH, MAN, MR. VINCENT! I'M SO *EXCITED* 'BOUT ALL THIS, I C'N HARDLY *SEE STRAIGHT*!

JUS' *IMAGINE*--ME, JERICHO *DRUKE*, MEETIN' THE *HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPEEN O' THE WORLD*!

Dr

Persodent LUCKY

TAKE IT *EASY*, YOU BIG *LUG*! THIS IS *OFFICIAL BUSINESS*--WE HAVE A *JOB* TO DO!

YANKEE ST

THE *MASTER* GOT THE TIP-OFF THIS *MORNING*--STRAIGHT FROM THE MOUTH OF *POLICE COMMISSIONER WESTON*!

THESE *NAZI* GUYS MEAN BUSINESS--THEIR NOTE SAID THEY'D *KILL* A SYMBOL OF AMERICA'S *GREATNESS* 'LESS WE FREED THE *NUREMBERG* CONS!

THE MASTER THINKS THEY MIGHT GO AFTER *THE CHAMP*--THOSE *CREEPS* HAVE HAD A *GRUDGE* AGAINST HIM SINCE HE BEAT THE *PANTS* OFF *SCHMELLING* BACK IN '39!

I 'MEMBER *THAT* ONE--MADE A MAN *PROUD*!

BUT I DUNNO 'BOUT JUS' BARGIN' IN ON THE *BROWN BOMBER* AN OFFERIN' *OUR* SECURITY SERVICES--

ANKEE

I MEAN, HE MUST HAVE *PLENTY O' BODYGUARDS ALREADY*!

TRUE, JERICHO, MY FRIEND--BUT NOT LIKE *US*--

BOXING TO-NITE JOE LOUIS VS MAL

EXIT

--NEVER LIKE *US*!

SO, MR. VINCENT-- NOW THAT WE'RE IN--

--YOU GOT ANY IDEAS 'BOUT HOW WE GONNA INTRODUCE OURSELVES TO THE MAN ?

WORRY NOT, FRIEND JERICHO-- OUR PARTS HAVE ALL BEEN CAREFULLY PLANNED IN ADVANCE!

THERE ARE SOME ADVANTAGES TO BEING A COG IN THE MACHINE OF JUSTICE, YOU KNOW--

NOW, COME ALONG. WE'VE--

--COME TO THE END OF YER LITTLE ADVENTURE, BUB--

WHO--?

CLIFFORD! CLIFFORD MARSLAND! MY, YOU ARE IN FINE FORM! YOU HAD ME GOING THERE FOR A MOMENT!

HEH! WELL, I ALWAYS SAY--IF YOU GONNA RIDE WITH THUGS, YOU BETTER LOOK THE PART!

I IMAGINE SO... HAVE YOU ANYTHING TO REPORT ?

DO I EVER! THE BOSS PICKED IT RIGHT-- THERE'S SOME KINDA HIT SET FOR TONIGHT--

LOUIE THE LOCK FOUND A WAYBILL FOR A DOZEN TOMMY GUNS IN THE CONCESSION OFFICE!

HOT DOGS AND HOT LEAD, EH ? WELL, I MUST GIVE THEM CREDIT FOR THEIR IMAGINATION--

YOU DO THAT, HARRY-- BUT MEANTIME, KEEP YER EYES PEELED FER TROUBLE!

NOW C'MON--

THERE'S SOMEONE I WANNA INTRADUCE YOU GUYS TO!

JOE LOUIS

HEY, CLIFFIE! HOW YOU BEEN, MAN? AIN'T SEEN YOU IN MONTHS!

BY THE WAY-- THANKS FOR THAT *REAL ESTATE* TIP! LOOKS LIKE I'LL MAKE MYSELF A *FORTUNE* ON THAT PROPERTY!

ANY-TIME, *BOMBER*--

HEY--THERE'S SOME GUY I WANT YOU T'MEET--BIG FANS O' YOURS--

--IF Y'GOT THE TIME!

NO PROBLEM! ANY FRIEND OF YOURS-- I'LL *MAKE* TIME!

SURE GOOD T'HEAR THAT, MISTER LOUIS--SEEIN' HOW I BEEN A *FAN* O' YOURS SINCE YOUR VERY FIRST BOUT!

NO KIDDIN'?

ALL TRUE, MISTER LOUIS--Y'SEE, I USED TO BOX MYSELF, LONG TIME AGO--AN' WE USETA TRAIN IN THE VERY SAME GYM!

HECK, I ALMOST WORKED FOR YOU ONCE OR TWICE-- CAME *REAL* CLOSE TO *SPARRIN'* WITH YOU--

THOUGH, AFTER SEEIN' THAT *LEFT* 'A YOURS, I'M KINDA *GLAD* I MISSED THE *CHANCE*!

HA! THAT'S GOOD, KID!

SAY--HOW'D YOU LIKE TO HELP AN *OLD MAN* OUT?

ANYTHIN', MISTER LOUIS!

WELL, THAT MAURIELLO FELLA'S ONE *TOUGH BIRD*-- GONNA NEED *HELP* AND *LUCK* TO SEE ME PAST HIM--

AN' I GOT A *FEELIN'* 'BOUT YOU, KID--YOU GONNA BRING ME *LUCK*...

HOW'D YOU LIKE TO STAY IN MY CORNER AT *RINGSIDE*?

I-I'D BE *HONORED*, MISTER LOUIS!

WELL THEN, WHAT ARE WE WAITIN' FOR?

LET'S GET THIS *SHOW* ON *THE ROAD*!

JOE LOUIS

WELL DONE, JERICHO-- NOW THAT THE *CHAMP* IS IN *GOOD HANDS*, IT'S TIME FOR *ME* TO TAKE *MY* POSITION!

I TELL YOU, LAMONT-- I DON'T FEEL *COMFORTABLE* ABOUT THIS *AT ALL!* ATTENDING A *BOXING MATCH* WHILE THOSE *NAZIS* ARE PLANNING THEIR NEXT *TARGET--*

HOT DOGS

HOT DOGS

CHIEF, YOU *WORRY* TOO MUCH! YOU OUGHT TO TAKE A *LESSON* FROM *MARGO* AND ME--*ENJOY* LIFE WHILE YOU *STILL HAVE IT!*

NOW, JUST *HUSH*, YOU TWO--THE *MAIN EVENT* IS ABOUT TO *BEGIN!*

LADEEZ AND GENTLEMEN--THE HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION OF THE WORLD--THE BROWN BOMBER --JOE LOUIS!!!

DC

OE UIS

IN MOMENTS, BOTH CHAMPION AND CHALLENGER ARE IN THE RING...

BOYS, I WANT A FAIR FIGHT--NO KIDNEY PUNCHES... AND WHEN I SAY BREAK--

JL

BUDDA

BUDDA BUDDA

WHAT THE--?!

GOOD LORD! SHOOTING OVER THE HEADS OF THE CROWD-- WITH *TOMMY GUNS--*

--IT'S THE *HOT DOG VENDORS!!*

GET OUT OF THEIR WAY!

THEY'RE HEADING TOWARDS RINGSIDE!

ZIS IS THE ONE! ZEE JEW NAMED BARUCH!

UND HIS RUSSIAN COUNTERPART --THE ONE CALLED GROMYKO!

TOGETHER, ZEY ARE MANKIND'S GREATEST SYMBOLS OF ZEE POTENTIAL FOR WORLD PEACE--

BUT TONIGHT, BOTH SHALL SERVE ZEE CAUSE OF ZEE THIRD REICH!

MAYBE, YOU NAZI SCUM-- BUT NOT IF I HAVE ANYTHING TO SAY ABOUT IT, BY GUM!

KLIK!

THE COMMISSIONER'S DECIDED TO TAKE DRASTIC MEASURES--

--GUESS I HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO DO THE SAME!

CAN'T HAVE HIM RUINING THE MASTER'S PLAN!

WHAP!

WELL DONE, MARGO--YOUR BRUTALITY IS... REFRESHING...

YOU'LL HAVE TO EXCUSE ME NOW, WHILE MR. VINCENT DOES HIS PART...

BACK, SCHVARTZE DOG!

VE VILL DEAL WITH YOU LATER!

FOR NOW, AMERICA MUST KNOW THIS: UNLESS OUR COUNTRYMEN IN NUREMBERG ARE SET FREE TO REBUILD OUR REICH, ZEE GREATEST MIND OF YOUR PITIFUL COUNTRY WILL BE SNUFFED OUT!

ACHT UND ACHT! HEIL HITLER! WE WILL NEVER GIVE UP THE FIGHT! DO YOU HEAR US, AMERICAN DOGS??

I HEAR YA ALL RIGHT--

PRESS

AN' I SAY--

--YOU'RE ALL WET!!

SWOOSH!!

VAS IST--

YAAAAHHHH

SSSSSS

THAT'S MY CUE--

DANGER EMERGENCY

LIGHTS OUT, FRITZ--

--IT'S WAY PAST YOUR BEDTIME!!

SHUNNK

WHAT'S GOING ON HERE??

WHO TURNED OFF THE LIGHTS?

WHAT ARE THOSE NAZIS DOING DOWN THERE?

CAN'T SEE A THING!!

ROLF-- HE'S--

BURNED TO A CRISP-- FOR THE FATHERLAND--

HAHA

UND ZAT LAUGHTER-- WHERE--

--FROM UP IN ZEE BLEACHERS--I BELIEVE--BUT WHO--

HAHAHAHA

RATTATATTATTARATTAT

HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA

HAHAHA

THE WEED OF CRIME BEARS BITTER FRUIT...

...THE SHADOW KNOWS!!

HA HA HA

GOTT IN HIMMEL.!!

THERE HE IS!! FIRE IN ZIS DIRECTION!

NO! ZIS WAY! I SAW HIM IN ZE FLASH OF HIS GUN!

THE JEW AND ZEE RUSSIAN, THE, ARE ESCAPING!

FORGET ZEM! KEEP YOUR EYES ON THE LIGHT OF ZEE SHADOW'S GUN!

IT ISS ZEE ONLY VAY WE CAN LOCATE HIM IN ZIS VERDAMNANT DARKNESS!

A DARKNESS THAT WILL SOON OVERTAKE YOU TOO, SWINE!

HE HASS STOPPED SHOOTING! UND HIS MAD LAUGHTER! THAT TOO ISS GONE!

IN THIS PITCH BLACKNESS-- I CAN SEE NOTHING!

HERMANN-- I CAN NOT SEE HIM!

W-WHERE ISS HE??

HERE...!

RATATATA

ARGGGGHH!!!

HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA

GOOD LORD... WHAT JUST HAPPENED DOWN THERE?

IT'S SO DARK... BUT THAT LAUGHTER... AND THE SCREAMING...

I'M NOT SURE I *WANT* TO KNOW...

OKAY, BOYS...

LET'S GET THOSE *BUMS* OUTTA THAT RING--I GOT *50G'S* RIDING ON LOUIS T'NIGHT!

AN' ONCE YOU GOT THE PLACE *MOPPED* UP--

"GET VINCENT TA TURN ON DA LIGHTS!"

PSST! MR. VINCENT? CLIFF SAYS YOU OUGHTA--

THEN, IT'S OVER!

:SIGH: ANOTHER JOB, WELL DONE...

SHUNK

IF ONLY *MY* PART IN THESE *AFFAIRS* WEREN'T SO... *TAXING*...

AND, SECONDS LATER, UP IN THE STANDS...

SAINTS PRESERVE US!

THE *NAZIS*--THEY'RE *GONE*!

MAYBE--BUT I DON'T THINK THEY *ESCAPED*!

REST EASY, COMMISSIONER! BARUCH AND THE RUSSIAN STATESMAN ARE IN SAFE HANDS!

THOSE *HOT DOG* VENDORS! THEY WERE TRYING TO--

OOHHH... LAMONT... WHAT HAPPENED...?

THEIR NEGOTIATIONS FOR AN *ATOMICALLY SAFE* FUTURE WILL CONTINUE UNABATED!

LET'S JUST SAY THAT A CERTAIN *SHADOW* CAST A *PALL* ON THEIR PLANS--

AND AS FOR OUR *NAZI* TERRORISTS--

"I SOMEHOW DOUBT WE'LL BE HEARING FROM THEM AGAIN!"

...HANG

(NUREMBERG) -- In grim succession over a down top Nazis stepped up the gallows this morning, to meet their maker for crimes against man. Some broke down in tears, begging for mercy, while others simply looked out on the crowd of Tribunal officials and reporters, promising an unholy vengeance from beyond the grave, all the while shouting angry (cont. page 13)

DAMN.

...CTION AT ...ADIUM BOUT! ...ID FOR 11th HOUR RELEASE FAILS!

...e Louis' latest bout was ...layed last night, when a ...uad of desperate Nazis ...empted a terrorist take ... of Yankee Stadium ...re the eyes of over ...00 shocked and ama... ...ight-fans. The sus... ...in the attack are ...d to be (...

BZZZZ

YOUR CALL TO SOUTH AMERICA IS READY, SIR

VERY GOOD... PUT HIM ON...

HELLO, MARTIN... I--

AH... I SEE YOU HAF ALREADY HEARD...

VELL, OUR MOVEMENT ATTEMPTED TO STOP ZEE PROCEEDINGS...

YES...YES...I TOO SHALL MISS ZEM...YES, I UNDERSTAND HOW YOU MUST FEEL...

...BUT, NO! YOU MUST NOT GIVE UP HOPE! NOW ISS ZEE TIME TO LIE LOW, TO QUIETLY CONSOLIDATE OUR POWER BASE...

SOON, MARTIN... SOON VE SHALL HAVE A SECOND CHANCE--

NOK NOK

YES? VAT ISS IT?

EVERYTHING WENT AS PLANNED.

WE BELIEVE THE BRUNDLE WOMAN IS PREGNANT.

GOOT.

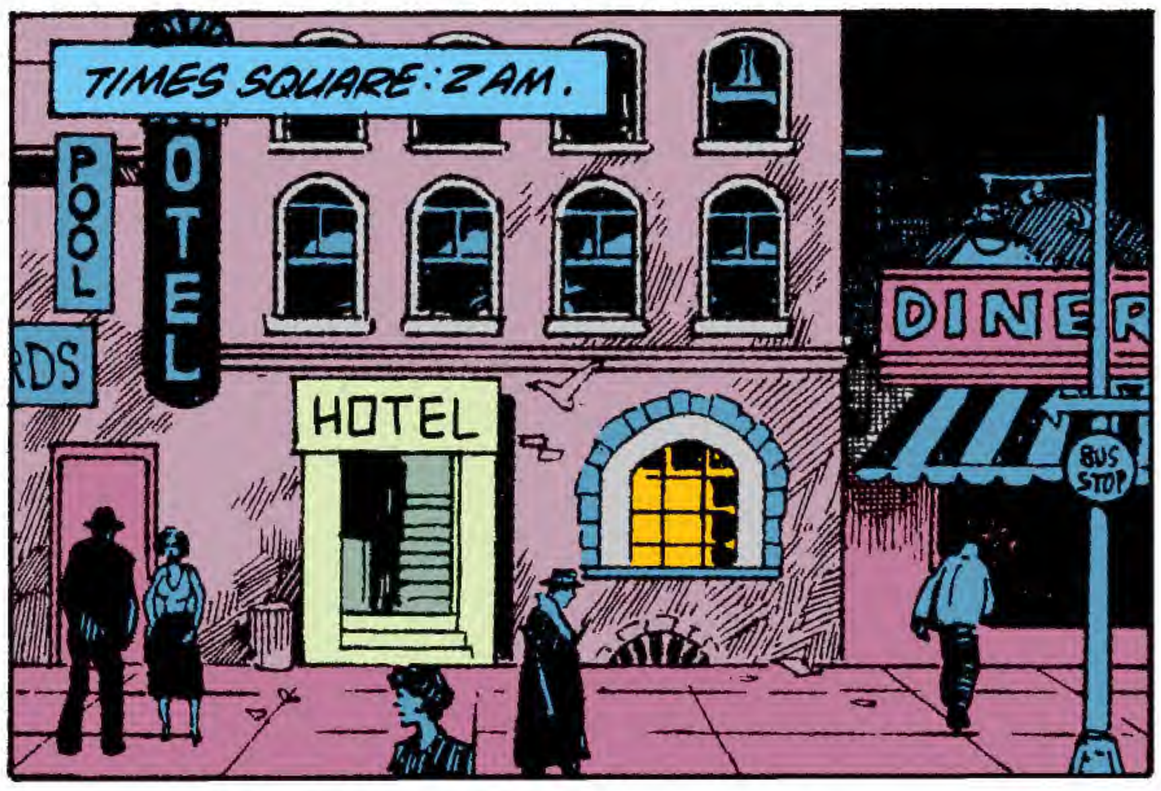
AS I VAS SAYING, MARTIN...

...IT'S ONLY A MATTER OF TIME.

BE VELL, MARTIN...

UND NOW, MR. STRAIT... VE WAIT...

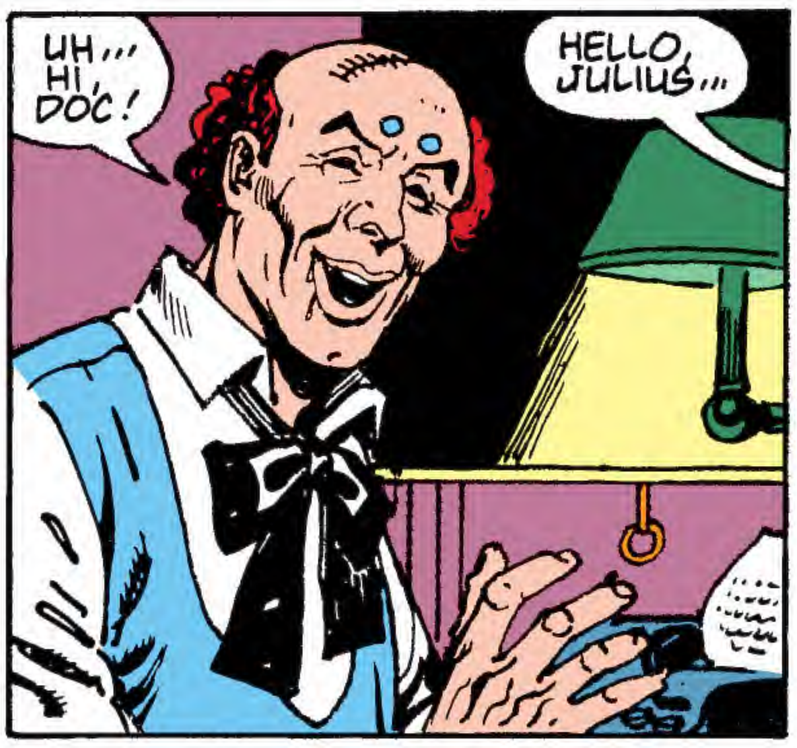
PART 2: 1949





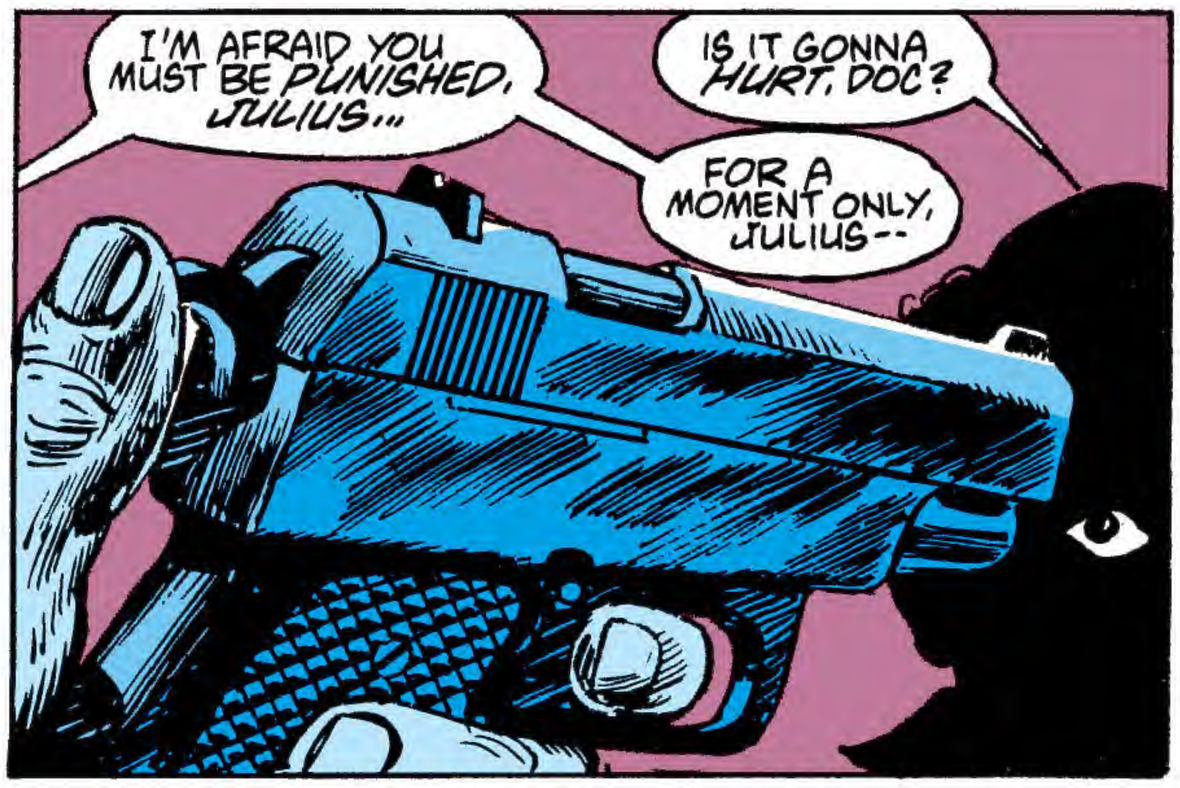
















BLAM!

TIMES SQUARE: THE NEXT DAY.

REPENT, SINNERS! THE ATOMIC AGE IS UPON US--AND WHOSOEVER CONTROLS THE ATOM, CONTROLS THE MEANS TO ETERNAL SALVATION!!

WHO WAS HE, INSPECTOR CARDONA?

CAN'T HARDLY TELL WITH HALF HIS HEAD BLOWN OFF LIKE THAT, CLYDE!

FOUND HIM WITH THE MURDER WEAPON IN HIS HAND--BUT THE HALF OF HIS HEAD LEFT INTACT INDICATES HE'D UNDERGONE SOME KIND OF RADICAL SURGERY--

--LOOKS LIKE A PRE-FRONTAL LOBOTOMY...

BUT IF THAT'S WHAT IT IS, HE'D NEVER'VE BEEN ABLE TO MUSTER UP THE DETERMINATION TO PULL THE TRIGGER!

THAT'S THE WAY WE'VE BEEN LOOKING AT IT, CLYDE...

AND THE PLACE IS CLEAN--TOO CLEAN!

NO I.D. ANYWHERE--EVEN THE TRASH CAN IS EMPTY!

BED'S MADE UP NICE AND NEAT, AND--

WHAT TH--?

A SACK OF BIRD SEED? NOW WHAT WOULD SOMEONE DO WITH THAT... UNLESS...

HUH! LOOKS LIKE OUR JOHN DOE WAS A NATURE LOVER--

MUST'VE SET FEED OUT EVERY NIGHT--

NICE SPREAD FOR A PIGEON--LAID OUT NICE AND NEAT--ON A PIECE OF--

--PAPER?!

RETURN of the STARJETS

STARJETS... STARJETS... WHY DOES THAT SOUND SO FAMILIAR?

MUST BE ONE'A THEM CHEAP SCIENCE FICTION YARNS--THE KIND I USED TO READ WHEN I WAS A--

THAT'S IT! "THE ADVENTURES OF CAPTAIN ASTRO AND THE STARJETS!" I WAS CRAZY FOR 'EM AS A YOUNGSTER!

IT'S ALL COMING BACK TO ME NOW! AND THE WRITER OF THOSE STORIES...WAS... JULIUS STRAIT!

BUT HE'D BECOME SOME KIND OF PREACHER--UNTIL HE AND HIS MOVEMENT DISAPPEARED ABOUT TWO YEARS AGO!

WAS THAT STRAIT? WAS HE PLANNING SOME KIND OF COMEBACK--AS A SCIENCE-FICTION WRITER? I WONDER...

GOT SOMETHING ON YOUR MIND, CLYDE?

ROOMS HOTEL

NO, INSPECTOR... IT'S NOTHIN'...

AHH! DO YOU SEE?!

GENERAL HOSPITAL

THOSE ARE THE WAGES OF SIN! DEATH! DEATH AND ETERNAL DAMNATION!

GREAT! JUST WHAT WE NEED--ANOTHER TIMES SQUARE FLAKE!

HE IS COMING, BROTHER! READ THE NEWS--AND PREPARE FOR ATOMIC SALVATION!

RIIIIGHT...

IGNORE THAT LOON, CLYDE--LET'S GET OUT OF HERE!

AAAHH, WHAT D'YA NEED THAT JUNK FOR?

HANG ON... LET ME GET ONE OF THESE...

SAY, CAN I DROP YOU OFF SOMEWHERE?

"NO THANKS, INSPECTOR-- I'LL JUST CATCH THE FIRST CAB I SEE..."

'BOUT TIME, SHREVVY... I BEEN WAITIN' HALF AN HOUR!

COULDN'T HELP IT, MR. BURKE-- MIDTOWN TRAFFIC'S HELL!

CAB STN

SO, UH... WHAT'S UP?

THINK I'M ON TO SOMETHING BIG-- BUT I NEED INFORMATION!

HANG ON A MINUTE-- I'LL CONNECT YA WIT' BURBANK--

HE KNOWS JUS' ABOUT EVERYTHIN'!

MAD SCIENCE STORIES WAS THE NAME OF THE MAGAZINE, BURB-- BUT FOR THE LIFE OF ME, I CAN'T REMEMBER THE PUBLISHER!

BEATS ME TOO, CLYDE-- MY MOTHER NEVER LET ME READ THAT STUFF!

105

SORRY I CAN'T HELP HERE, CLYDE--

'S OKAY, BURB-- I JUST HAVE TO THINK OF ANOTHER WAY TO--

HEY! YOU SAID MAD SCIENCE, DIN'T YA, MR. BURKE? I USETA READ THAT MAG--AN' ANOTHER ONE CALLED SAUCY SPACE STORIES TOO!

I EVEN HAD A 'SCRIPTION TO THAT ONE-- AN' I REMEMBER IT WAS PUBLISHED BY HAMMERSMITH ENTERPRISES!

I STILL PASS BY THEIR OFFICES ONCE IN A WHILE -- THEY'RE DOWN IN THE VILLAGE!

AND SO, TWENTY MINUTES LATER...

SORRY TO DISAPPOINT YOU, MR. BURKE, BUT COMPETITION FROM THE COMIC BOOK COMPANIES HAS JUST ABOUT KILLED THE PULP MAGAZINE MARKET...

...AND IN THE LAST FEW YEARS HAMMERSMITH HAS REDIRECTED THEIR EFFORTS TOWARDS MORE... ADULT FARE...

BUT YOU MUST STILL GET SOME BLIND SUBMISSIONS FOR SCIENCE FICTION STORIES--?

MR. HOWARD HANDLES THE SLUSH PILE--

YOU BET! AND SOME OF THE MOST GOSH-AWFUL STUFF--

COULD I POSSIBLY EXAMINE THE FILE?

WELL... MOST OF 'EM I TRASH RIGHT AWAY... THE GOOD ONES, I FORWARD TO A FRIEND OF MINE WHO'S A COMIC BOOK EDITOR--

"--OVER AT PLEASANT HOUSE PUBLICATIONS..."

YOU'VE COME TO THE *RIGHT* PLACE, MR. BURKE-- PHIL HOWARD *DID* SEND ME A STORY BY JULIE *STRAIT* A COUPLE OF MONTHS AGO!

SPUD

FUNNY ABOUT STRAIT... HE COULD HAVE MADE A *FORTUNE* WITH HIS *STARJETS* SERIES... BUT HE GAVE IT ALL UP ONE DAY--

BATMAN

Action

EDITOR

--SAID THE ONLY WAY TO MAKE *REAL* MONEY IN THIS WORLD WAS TO START A *RELIGION*!

DIDN'T SEE HIDE NOR HAIR OF STRAIT FOR YEARS--THEN *HOWARD* SENDS ME THIS STORY... IT WAS WRITTEN FOR THE PULPS, Y'SEE...

...BUT IT WAS SO *WEIRD*, SO *STRANGE*...

...I DECIDED TO *ADAPT* IT FOR COMICS AND RUN IT...

PLEASANT HOUSE PUB

WEIRD STRANGE SCIENCE 10¢

THIS ISSUE: *COMING* OF THE ATOM MAN!

BARRY

COMING OF THE ATOM-MAN

STORY BY JULIUS STRAIT
ART BY BARRY ALAN KRAUS
AND BILL WRAY

TELL ME WHAT YOU THINK OF IT, MR. BURKE...

X-RAY SPECS

A MONKEYS

THE WAR BETWEEN EARTH AND GALTOS 2 WAS LONG AND BLOODY...

THE GALTS WERE AN EVIL AND VICIOUS RACE.

SOME SAID THEY *DEVOURED* THE BODIES OF THEIR ENEMIES.

BUT AFTER TEN YEARS OF TORMENT, EARTH SCIENTISTS UNLEASHED A *NEW FURY* THAT WIPED OUT THE *GALT* EMPIRE IN MERE *DAYS*.

THE EARTH COUNCIL OVERSAW THE *OCCUPATION* OF GALTOS, AND DECREED THAT NO *GALT* WOULD EVER SET FOOT ON NATIVE *EARTH* SOIL.

THEY WERE TOO UNCONTROLLABLE... TOO *EVIL* TO BE ALLOWED TO INFILTRATE EARTH.

BUT LIKE THE *SERPENT* OF *EDEN*, THEIR WAYS WERE ALSO... *SEDUCTIVE*...

I HAVE POWERSSS, EARTH-MAN...

...*POWERS* YOU HAVE NOT YET *DREAMED OF*...

I SENSE *YOU* DESIRE THIS POWER...*YOU* WISH TO LEAD *YOUR* PEOPLE...

YES... BUT I--

IT CAN BE DONE, HUMAN...THIS GALT CAN *DO IT* FOR YOU... WITH THE *CRYSTAL*...

BUT I COULD *NEVER* GET YOU BACK TO *EARTH!* THE OTHERS WOULD *NEVER* PERMIT IT--

USA AF

LEAVE THAT TO *ME*, HUMAN--THE *CRYSTAL'S* POWER REACHES *DEEP* INTO THE *HUMAN MIND*--

IT CAN *MANIPULATE*...THE VERY *SIGHTS* AND *SOUNDS* YOU HUMANS TAKE FOR *GRANTED!*

AND NOW--

--WE LET YOUR *FELLOW* EARTHMEN DO THE REST!

IN A FEW WEEKS, I RETURNED TO EARTH AND DISCOVERED THAT HERE, TOO, THE *WAR* HAD TAKEN ITS TOLL. MY PEOPLE HAD BECOME *DIRECTIONLESS*--TO WIN THE WAR HAD BEEN THEIR *ONLY* PURPOSE--

--AND WITHOUT THAT, THEY WERE *NOTHING.*

WITHIN WEEKS THE GALT'S HYPNOTIC JEWEL MADE ME THE MOST POPULAR MAN ON THE PLANET...

...THOUSANDS CAME TO HEAR ME SPEAK... MILLIONS LOOKED TO ME FOR *HOPE*... A *PLANET* HUNG ON MY EVERY *WORD.*

BUT I ALONE HAD *LITTLE* TO OFFER BEYOND MY OWN AMBITION. I HAD NO PLAN AND THE MASSES WERE *WAITING*...

THE GALT HOWEVER HAD PLANS OF HIS *OWN*...

THE PEOPLE ARE UNDER *YOUR* CONTROL NOW, HUMAN--

BUT *YOUR* CONTROL IS *MY* CONTROL, TOO!

IT IS TIME FOR US TO TAKE THE *NEXT* STEP!

THIS *EGG* HELD THE OFFSPRING OF A TYPICAL GALT--BUT YOUR EARTH BOMBS *IRRADIATED* IT--TURNED IT INTO SOMETHING *NEW!*

ITS *MIND* WAS INCREDIBLY *POWERFUL*-- EVEN WHILE IT *INCUBATED!*

AND NOW-- IT IS READY TO *LIVE!*

AND YOU ARE READY TO *DIE!*

NOOOOO! YOU *CAN'T!* MY PEOPLE WILL NEVER *BELIEVE*--

YOU SEE? THEY *KNOW* WHAT YOU ARE DOING! THEY WANT YOU TO *LET ME GO!*

FOOL--THEY SEE WHAT *HE* ALLOWS THEM TO *SEE! HE* IS THEIR *HOPE* NOW--AND *YOU*--

--*YOU* ARE THE *ENEMY!*

AND AS I RUSHED DOWN TOWARDS THE RABID, HUNGRY MOB BELOW ME, I COULD SEE THE GALT WAS *RIGHT*--

THE ATOM MAN HAD *BLINDED* THEM ALL TO HIS *TRUE* NATURE--THEY WERE *HIS!* AND FOR *ME* IT WAS...

THE END!

THAT'S... UH... QUITE A STORY...

THANKS! THAT'S WHAT I'M PAID TO DO--SPIN A YARN--

--AND SCARE THE HECK OUTTA THE KIDS!

WELL, MR. BURKE, IF THAT'S ALL-- I'D LIKE TO BE GETTING ON HOME...

WEIRD STRANGE SCIENCE

HARNESSING THE POWER OF ATOMIC SALVATION

THANK YOU, SIR. MIND IF I KEEP THE COMIC?

HMM... THAT COMIC... AND THE *TRACT* THAT PREACHER PUSHED ON ME... IT'S *GOT* TO BE MORE THAN *COINCIDENCE*...

SOMEHOW, STRAIT WAS *EJECTED* FROM THE RELIGIOUS GROUP HE'D ESTABLISHED...

...AND GOT HIMSELF LOBOTOMIZED IN THE BARGAIN!

THERE'S A *LOT* I DON'T KNOW *YET*, BUT ONE THING'S *CERTAIN*...

STRAIT'S DEATH WAS NO *SUICIDE*!

WHOEVER DID THE HEAD-JOB ON HIM FIGURED THE OPERATION WOULD KEEP HIM *QUIET*...

...BUT THEY DIDN'T COUNT ON HIS BRAIN'S ABILITY TO *DREDGE UP* A TWISTED VERSION OF HIS *FALL FROM GRACE*!

HIS *MIND* WAS TOO FRAZZLED TO ALLOW HIM TO BLOW THE WHISTLE IN ANY *NORMAL* WAY, BUT SOMETHING INSIDE HIM *HAD* TO GET THE STORY OUT--

...AND THAT *COMIC BOOK STORY* WAS A KIND OF BRAIN-DAZED *ALLEGORY* FOR WHAT HAPPENED TO HIM!

HMM... ACCORDING TO THIS BROCHURE, *THE FLOCK* MISSION CENTER IS LOCATED UP ON 42ND STREET...

...RIGHT BY THE *SITE* THEY'RE PLANNING TO BUILD THAT UNITED NATIONS WORLD HEAD-QUARTERS...

WHOLESALE 2nd RETAIL STORE

TAXI

UH, SHREWY--YOU MIND TAKING A RIDE *UPTOWN*?

GEEZ, MR. BURKE, Y'KNOW I DON'T MIND--

BUT THE MASTER'S APT T'BLOW A *GASKET* OVER ALL THIS PERSONAL USE OF HIS *FACILITIES*!

...BUT LEMME JUST CALL BURB--SEE IF WE CAN DO IT ON THE QT--

YES, SHREVVY--WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU THIS TI--

REPENT THE ATOMIC END IS NEAR

SHREVVY--AHEAD OF YOU--LOOK OUT--

I SEE HIM, MR. BURKE...

...ONE'A THEM RELIGIOUS TYPES--

--AND HE LOOKS LIKE DEATH WARMED OVER!

REPENT THE ATOMIC END IS NEAR

C'MON, MOSES--GET OUTTA THE WAY!

NOW WHAT? HE'S TILTIN' OVER HIS SIGN--

TAXI

SHREVVY! MOVE IT! THAT'S NO SIGN! IT'S--

FWOOMM

QUICKLY! EXTINGUISH THE BLAZE!

OUR WORK MUST GO UNNOTICED BY ALL!

ACME DELIVERY

REMARKABLE! THE AUTOMOBILE SEEMS ALMOST UNDAMAGED--IT MUST BE SOME MANNER OF ARMORED VEHICLE!

BUT WHO WOULD HAVE NEED OF SUCH A CAR--?

IT DOESN'T MATTER, BROTHER!

WHAT DOES IS THAT THESE TWO MEDDLERS ARE STILL ALIVE!

GOOD! TAKE THEM! FOR THE CEREMONY!

SHREVVY? BURKE? WHAT'S GOING ON IN THERE--?

SHREVVY! BURKE! ANSWER ME!
NOTHING!
THEY MUST BE IN SOME KIND OF *TROUBLE*--
--SO IT'S TIME FOR ME TO CALL OUT THE *TROOPS*!
DR. SAYRE? BURBANK HERE! I'VE GOT A PAIR OF AGENTS IN *DISTRESS* DOWNTOWN--
SAY NO MORE, OLD *SON*--I'M OFF!
HARRY--BURKE AND SHREVVY--THEY'RE IN *TROUBLE*--
ON MY WAY, BURBANK!
AND IN MOMENTS...
GLAD I MANAGED TO CONTACT *HAWKEYE* TOO... *THREE* AGENTS ON THE SCENE SHOULD BE ABLE TO HANDLE *ANY* PROBLEM.
NOW ALL WE HAVE TO DO IS GET THIS SITUATION *CLEANED UP* WITHOUT A HITCH--
--AND WE CAN ALL JUST *FORGET* IT EVER HAPPENED, AND NO ONE--ESPECIALLY *THE MASTER*--NEED EVER KNOW IT--
--UH-OH...
LET'S TRY TO MAKE THIS *BRIEF*, BOYS... I'M DUE AT THE *SAVOY* IN AN *HOUR*!
SO? WHAT HAVE YOU GOT THERE, HAWKEYE?
I GOT *ZILCH*, DOC! YOU COULD'A LEFT THAT MEDICINE BAG OF YOURS HOME TONIGHT--
--THIS CAB'S *EMPTY*!
NOT *QUITE*, HAWKEYE...

LOOK ON THE CAB'S FLOOR, HAWKEYE-- THE CLUE IS THERE!

CLUE? NAAH-- THIS IS ONE'A SHREWVY'S COMIC BOOKS-- HE'S ALWAYS READIN' THEM!

YOU TRY MY PATIENCE, HAWKEYE.

GIVE IT TO ME.

I TELL YA, IT'S JUST A COMIC--HECK, SHREWVY AN' ME USED TO TRADE 'EM!

TELL BURBANK THAT I HAVE BEEN MONITORING HIS BROADCASTING ACTIVITIES--AND I AM AWARE OF BURKE'S INVESTIGATIONS.

HAVE HIM PROVIDE US WITH THE ADDRESS OF THE FLOCK MISSION...

AND THEN HAVE MARSLAND AND HIS THUGS PICK UP THIS CAB--

--THESE BULLETPROOF MODELS ARE DIFFICULT TO COME BY...

MEANWHILE, IN A CONDEMNED CHURCH ON 42ND STREET AND FIRST AVENUE...

YOU HAF DONE VELL, MEIN BROTHERS...

THE EVE ISS UPON US... ZE ATOMIC CHILD SHALL SOON SPEAK UNTO US, AND OFFER US THE NEW DIRECTION VE GO DESPERATELY CRAVE!

HIS MESSAGE IS CLEAR--UND TONIGHT, WHEN WE UNVEIL HIM TO ZE WORLD--

--LET ZE UNFAITHFUL BEWARE!

UND NOW, MY *FAITHFUL* ONE'S, AS *YOU* PREPARE FOR ZIS EVENING'S *REVELATIONS*, ZO MUST I.

WHEN NEXT WE MEET, IT SHALL BE AT ZE *GATEWAY* TO A BRAVE NEW WORLD!

AHH, GENTLEMEN... ZAT VAS AN *EXHAUSTING* PERFORMANCE.

KLOK

BUT IT *DOES* PROVE *VON* THING--

--HERR GOEBBELS VAS *CORRECT*. ZE *BIG LIE*. ZAT IS VAT IT TAKES TO *ACCOMPLISH* ZE *IMPOSSIBLE*!

PERHAPS, HERR STURM--BUT WE SEE ONLY A *HANDFUL* OF *EXTREMISTS* SUPPORTING *YOUR* CAUSE!

CERTAINLY THERE ARE MANY MORE MEMBERS OF THE *FLOCK*--BUT FEW ARE *AWARE* OF *YOUR TRUE INTENT*--

--AND *FEWER STILL* WOULD SUPPORT YOU IF THEY *KNEW*!

NO, HERR STURM... WE ARE AFRAID YOUR EFFORTS CAN BE OF ONLY *LIMITED* VALUE TO THE *BUND*!

LIMITED VALUE?! TONIGHT, YOU SHALL SEE *THOUSANDS* OF WILLING *DISCIPLES* --ALL OF ZEM *AWAITING* ZE ASCENT OF ZE *SAVIOR* I HAVE *CREATED*!

I KNEW FROM ZE MOMENT I *WRESTED* CONTROL OF *SECOND COMING MINISTRIES* FROM *JULIUS STRAIT* THAT *ZIS* WOULD BE MY *TOOL*--

--TO CREATE *ANARCHY* IN ZE *STREETS* OF *AMERICA*--

--SO OUR BELOVED *REICH* COULD *RISE AGAIN*!

AND WHAT OF *STRAIT*, HERR STURM?

HE HAS BEEN *DISPOSED* OF PERMANENTLY. I HAD BELIEVED A LOBOTOMY WOULD SUFFICE--

--BUT ZE *VEILED* MEANINGS WITHIN HIS *COMIC BOOK* STORIES THREATENED TO EXPOSE OUR CAUSE.

AND THE TWO UNCONSCIOUS MEN YOUR *ACOLYTES* BROUGHT HERE?

INVESTIGATORS, NO DOUBT.

BUT ZEY TOO SHALL PROVE *USEFUL* TO US--AS AN *EXAMPLE* OF ZE WAY VE WILL CONDUCT OUR BUSINESS VEN THE *NEW ORDER* TAKES HOLD.

BUT ALL ZESE QUESTIONS MUST *STOP*.

PLEASE--ALLOW ME TO SHOW YOU ZE *FRUITS* OF MY LABORS...

MIND YOUR STEP, GENTLEMEN... ZESE FLOORS ARE ZLIPPERY... ZEY ARE NOT USED VERY OFTEN.

ZIS CHURCH IS SCHEDULED TO BE DEMOLISHED TO MAKE VAY FOR ZAT UNITED NATIONS ORGANIZATION...

...BUT AFTER WE SUCCEED IN OUR MISSION I SHALL MAKE IT AN ETERNAL MONUMENT AS ZE SITE OF ZE BIRTH OF OUR MOVEMENT.

AH... HERE VE ARE. A MOMENT PLEASE.

NOK NOK

YES, REVEREND STURM--WHAT CAN I DO FOR--

VE WISH TO SEE THE CHILD, JUNE.

WHO IS IT, MOTHER?

IT'S REVEREND STURM AND--

--UND THREE... KINGS... WHO HAF COME TO PRAISE HIS ARRIVAL.

NO--I AM NOT READY YET. I WILL SEE THEM LATER.

VERY VELL THEN. LATER.

HOW DARE HE?! THIS IS PREPOSTEROUS!

CLK

NO--IT IS PERFECT! IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT ZE CHILD BELIEVE AS I HAF TAUGHT HIM--ZAT HE IS THE CHOSEN ONE!

INDEED, HIS INTELLECT IS ASTOUNDING! ONLY THREE YEARS OLD, AND YET...

...PERHAPS HE ISS A MUTATION... WE CANNOT BE SURE...

I AM SORRY, HERR STURM, BUT WE REMAIN UNCONVINCED.

EVEN IF YOUR SUPPORTERS BELIEVE IN THIS CHILD, THIS CHURCH CAN HOLD ONLY A FEW THOUSAND!

IT WILL TAKE YEARS TO CONVINCE THE MASSES!

NO, HERR KRUPT! NOT YEARS, NOT DAYS--BUT A SINGLE MOMENT!

FOR I HAVE HARNESSED A POWER GREATER THAN THE ATOM--A POWER WE WILL USE TO INFILTRATE AMERICAN MINDS WHEN THEY ARE MOST VULNERABLE!

AND WHAT IS THIS POWER?

THE AMERICANS CALL IT--

--TELEVISION!

LATER THAT EVENING...

I CAN'T FIGURE IT! I GUESS A *LATE-NIGHT* REVIVAL MEETING IS NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT--

BUT ALL THESE *CAMERAS* DON'T *FIT* THE PICTURE!

AND THEY AREN'T EVEN *MOVIE CAMERAS*--AT LEAST, NOT LIKE ANY *I'VE* EVER SEEN!

MATTER OF *FACT*, *ALL* THIS EQUIPMENT SEEMS *STRANGE*... I WONDER WHAT--

HEY, YOU! QUIT *LOAFIN'* AND GET TO WORK!

NO *BREAKS* FOR US--*TELEVISION* WORKERS AIN'T GOT A *UNION*--

--AT LEAST, NOT *YET*!

SO THAT'S IT! THESE ARE *TV* CAMERAS!

WELL, I GUESS IF I WANT *IN* LIKE THE MASTER TOLD ME TO DO--

--I'VE GOTTA *CARRY* MY *WEIGHT*!

HMM... THE *OTHER* GUYS'RE SETTIN' UP RIGHT IN FRONT OF THE *PULPIT*--GUESS THEY'RE GONNA MAKE A *VARIETY SHOW* OUT OF THIS--

--BUT I *BET* *TEXACO* AIN'T THE *SPONSOR*!

ACHHH!! HEY! *YOU*!

YOU ARE *STUPID*, NO?

THAT CAMERA GOES BACK HERE--OR DO YOU NOT UNDERSTAND THE *ENGLISH*?

UH--NO ONE TOLD ME--

SET IT UP TO FACE THE *CARDS*--AND BE *CAREFUL* YOU DON'T KNOCK UP AGAINST--

THUMP

WHOOPS.

ACCHHH! HOW I LONG FOR THE DAYS WHEN I DIRECTED THE MOTION PICTURES!

THERE, AT LEAST THE WORKERS WERE COMPETENT!

NOW PICK UP THE CARDS! SCHNELL!!

GEEZ... WHATTA GROUCH--

HEY-- WHAT'S ON THESE CARDS?!

STRANGE PICTURES-- OF--

PAY NO MIND, FOOL! JUST DO AS YOU'RE TOLD!

SORRY-- I JUST COULDN'T HELP NOTICING--

ACCHHH! YOU NOTICE TOO MUCH FOR YOUR OWN GOOD!

GO HELP SET UP THE ANTENNA...

JUST-- GET OUT OF MY SIGHT!

NOT ONLY IS THIS GUY A MANIAC-- HE'S PARANOID TOO!

HE'S HIDING SOMETHING-- AND THOSE CARDS-- THIS WHOLE SHOW-- ARE IT!

BUT THE ANTENNA-- LOOK AT IT! IT'S SO TINY, ITS SIGNAL COULDN'T REACH MORE THAN A FEW FEET!

THERE'S GOTTA BE SOMETHING ELSE...

HEY, OSCAR! MOVE IT ABOUT TEN DEGREES TO THE LEFT--

--GOTTA LINE IT UP JUST RIGHT--

--YEAH-- JUST A LITTLE MORE--

THAT'S IT-- WE'RE LOCKED INTO THE SIGNAL!

LOCKED IN??

LOCKED IN... TO THE EMPIRE STATE BUILDING ANTENNA CURRENTLY SENDING OUT A SIGNAL ON A NEW FREQUENCY... FILLING THE AIRWAVES WITH A NEW KIND OF BROADCAST...

FOR SOME, IT IS A NEW SOURCE OF FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT...

FOR OTHERS, A COVETED WONDER OF A NEW AGE...

APPLIANCES

AND FOR A FEW, IT IS LIFE ITSELF...

WHILE IN A SECLUDED BACKROOM OF THE ABANDONED CHURCH...

I MUST GO NOW, GENTLEMEN... BUT KEEP YOUR EYES ON ZE SCREEN--

-- FOR VAT YOU VILL SEE THERE VILL FOREVER TURN ZE TIDE FOR ZE MASTER RACE!

--THE BARTENDER LOOKS HIM STRAIGHT IN THE EYE AND SAYS--

"AH'LL KIWW YOU A MIWWION TIMES!"

BUT SERIOUSLY, FOL--

SQRREEEEEEEEE

--IS A PESTILENCE DEVOURING OUR NATION, MY FRIENDS...

...AN ENDLESS PROCESSION OF COMMUNISTS AND ANARCHISTS IN OUR MIDSTS!

THE RUSSIANS PURSUE THEIR DREAMS OF WORLD DOMINATION-- THE CHINESE REBUKE OUR FRIENDLY HAND!

--AND GOD HIMSELF, IN HIS INFINITE WISDOM, HAS SHOWN US THE WAY!

HE HAS GIVEN US THE POWER TO RULE--THE POWER OF THE ATOM!

AND THROUGH THE POWER, WE SHALL ALL FIND THE SOURCE OF OUR SALVATION!

THE USURPERS ARE AMONG US, DEAR FRIENDS--MAKE NO MISTAKE ABOUT IT!

ONLY ONE THING SEPARATES US FROM THESE GODLESS FOREIGN INFILTRATORS--

BEAR WITNESS NOW, AMERICA--

—SEE THE DAWN OF A NEW AGE--

THAT'S FUNNY, DEAR,,, THIS SHOW ISN'T LISTED,,,

--THE ANSWER TO OUR PRAYERS--

ODESSA APPLIANCES

FOR THIS, THEY BUMPED UNCLE MILTIE?

--THE NEW WORD MADE FLESH--

I DO HOPE THEY'RE NOT GOING TO ASK FOR DONATIONS,,,

--THE CHILD OF THE ATOM!

BORNE OUT OF THAT RAGING FIRE THAT IS AMERICA'S TO CONTROL--

HE IS THE PRODUCT OF THAT GOD-GIVEN POWER-- HIS WILL MUST DECIDE OUR DESTINY!

A DESTINY THAT WILL EXPRESS ITSELF IN EITHER THE HAND OF FRIENDSHIP,,, OR THE SWORD OF DESTRUCTION!

AMERICA WILL HARDLY HAVE A CHOICE! FIRST WE INSTILL THE HOLINESS OF THE CHILD,,,

ON MY COUNT, OSCAR! WE SUPERIMPOSE THE SUBLIMINALS-- NOW!

WHICH WILL IT BE?

NOW FOR THE SWITCH, OSCAR!

GOT IT, SIR! CUT BACK TO CAMERA THREE-- HERE COMES THE PUBLIC OPINION MAKER!

HE-HE'S *RIGHT!* DON'T KNOW *WHY*, BUT I CAN *FEEL IT!*

GOD HIMSELF GAVE US THE *BOMB*--AND IT'S OUR *RIGHT* TO *USE IT!*

I SAW SOMETHIN'-- JUS' FOR A *SECOND*--

I *KNOW* THAT *ATOM*-BOY REALLY *DOES* HAVE THE *POWER!*

ODESSA APPLIANCES

AND LORD, THOUGH I PRAY FOR *PEACE*--

--I WILL *FOLLOW* IN THE COURSE *YOU* DESIRE!

THE *POWER* IS *OURS*, AMERICA! BUT *HOW* SHALL WE *USE IT?*

TO WEED OUT THE *EVILS* THAT THREATEN TO *SUBVERT?* TO ELIMINATE THE NON-BELIEVERS? THE *GODLESS?* THE *FOLLOWERS* OF *SATAN?*

NOW IT WILL BE DECIDED-- BY HE WHO *MUST DECIDE!*

AMONG US ARE *TWO* SUCH *HEATHENS!* THEY WILL BE *FIRST* TO FEEL THE *WRATH*--

--IF *THAT* IS WHAT THE *CHILD OF THE ATOM* DECIDES!

NOW: WHICH SHALL IT BE? THE HAND... OR THE SWORD?

AHH... GOOD. CAMERA THREE CONTINUES *FLASHING* THE *SWORD* AT THREE-SECOND INTERVALS. THE *BLOOD* OF AMERICA *BOILS* IN THE STREETS...

AND NOW... EH? THE *SUBLIMINALS* HAVE *STOPPED?*

ACCCHH! OSCAR! WHAT ARE YOU *DOING!* I *TOLD* YOU TO CONTINUE--

THOKKK!

WHICH SHALL IT BE, CHILD?!
I-I-DON'T--
DECIDE--
--EH? THAT SOUND-- IT--
BWOOOM!!!
GOTT IN HIMMEL! ZE TRANSMITTER TRUCK HAS BEEN HIJACKED! ZE BROADCAST HAS BEEN CUT OFF!
THE LIGHTS! LOOK, OUT, THEY'RE--
IEEEEE!!!! FIRE!
RUN!!
REVEREND--! WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THE INTERRUPTION?
EHHH--AN EMISSARY OF SATAN, NO DOUBT, CHILD--
THEN SHOW YOURSELF, DEMON!
THE CHILD OF THE ATOM COMMANDS YOU!!
DO YOU HEAR--?
HAHAHA HA HA HA SKRAAHH
I HEAR, CHILD--

BUT I HAVE *NEVER* HAD MUCH *PATIENCE* FOR THE *DEMANDS* OF *CHILDREN*!

GET THEE BEHIND ME, SATAN!

PUT THE WEAPON *DOWN* AND GET *OUT* OF THE WAY, INFANT-- YOU ARE NOT THE ONE I--

NO!

GIVE ME THAT, YOU *FOOL*! I'LL DO *THIS* MYSELF--

STURM! WHAT IS GOING *ON* OUT THERE?

THE BROADCAST HAS *STOPPED*--THE ROOM IS *FILLING UP* WITH *SMOKE*!

WE'RE COMING OUT--

NO--

DEMON! YOU DARE--?

YOU'RE STAYING *RIGHT WHERE* YOU ARE!

THUKKK

HA HA HA HA HA HA

AND NOW, STURM-- IT'S *YOUR* TURN TO--

EH?

POK POK POK POK POK

SO... THE *FEW FAITHFUL* REMAIN--

BLAM

BLAM

JEEZ...WHAT THE HELL'S GOING ON HERE...

--JUST IN TIME TO MEET THEIR *TRUE MAKERS!*

BLAM

BLAM

:URRGGGHHHH:

BLAM

:ARRGGGGHHH!!:

BLAM

BLAM BLAM

AHH... I SEE THE *FIRE* HAS ACCOMPLISHED WHAT *MY* MEANS OF PERSUASION COULD *NOT!*

THE FEW MISGUIDED *TRUE* BELIEVERS FLEE FROM THEIR *FALSE PROPHET!*

NOW ALL THAT REMAINS IS TO FIND--

WHA --?

THUD!

A BURNING TIMBER--MY GUNS--

YOUR TIME HAS *COME, SHADOW.* TO *DIE* BY ZE *SWORD*--

THE *HEAT*--TOO *INTENSE!* I CAN STAND *NO MORE!*

STAND BACK, MY BROTHERS--

--WE WILL *SHOOT* OUR WAY OUT!

PLOW
PLOW
PLOW

NOOOOOOOO

THE DREAM IS OVER, STURM.

THE TRANCE IS BROKEN.

"NOW THE PEOPLE OF THIS CITY CAN REST EASY...

ODESS.
APPLIANCES

"RETURN TO THEIR HOMES, THEIR FAMILIES...

"...AND FORGET THIS INCIDENT--AS IF IT NEVER TOOK PLACE...

"CLIFFORD?"

WE GOT 'EM, BOSS... PRETTY BEAT UP, BUT OKAY, I GUESS...

C'MON--LET'S GET THE HELL OUTTA HERE!

NO... YOU GO. I STILL HAVE BUSINESS HERE...

YOU... YOU MURDERED MY FOLLOWERS... KILLED THE REVEREND... DESTROYED MY TEMPLE...

AH...

I WAS WRONG BEFORE... YOU ARE NOT A DEMON--YOU ARE THE ANTICHRIST HIMSELF--AND I WILL DESTROY YOU!

HA HA HA HA HA HA HA

YOU DARE TO LAUGH?

STOP IT!

DO YOU HEAR ME?

I AM THE ATOMIC CHILD!

STOP IT, I SAY!!

STOP!!

NO, LITTLE ONE... YOUR *TIME HAS COME...*

PLEASE-- DON'T!

HE-HE'S JUST A *CHILD* --MY *CHILD!*

I *KNEW* THIS WOULD HAPPEN-- *I FELT IT!*

BUT I ALSO KNOW THAT MY SON *IS* SPECIAL--AND THAT ONE DAY HE WILL LEAD MANKIND INTO A *NEW FUTURE!*

SURELY, EVEN *YOU* CAN SEE *THAT!!*

I ONLY SEE THAT YOU ARE *QUITE MAD,* MADAM.

THAT, AND THE FACT THAT THE *THREAT,* FOR NOW, IS *ENDED.*

I SEE NO NEED TO *ELIMINATE* THE CHILD.

YOU ARE FREE TO LEAVE THIS PLACE... IF YOU *CAN.*

TEACH HIM *WELL*, WOMAN-- *THE SHADOW* WILL BE *WATCHING...*

YES...

HUSH NOW, CHILD...

WE HAVE *CONFRONTED* AND *BESTED* THE EVIL ONE--

--YOUR *FATHER* HAS SEEN TO IT!

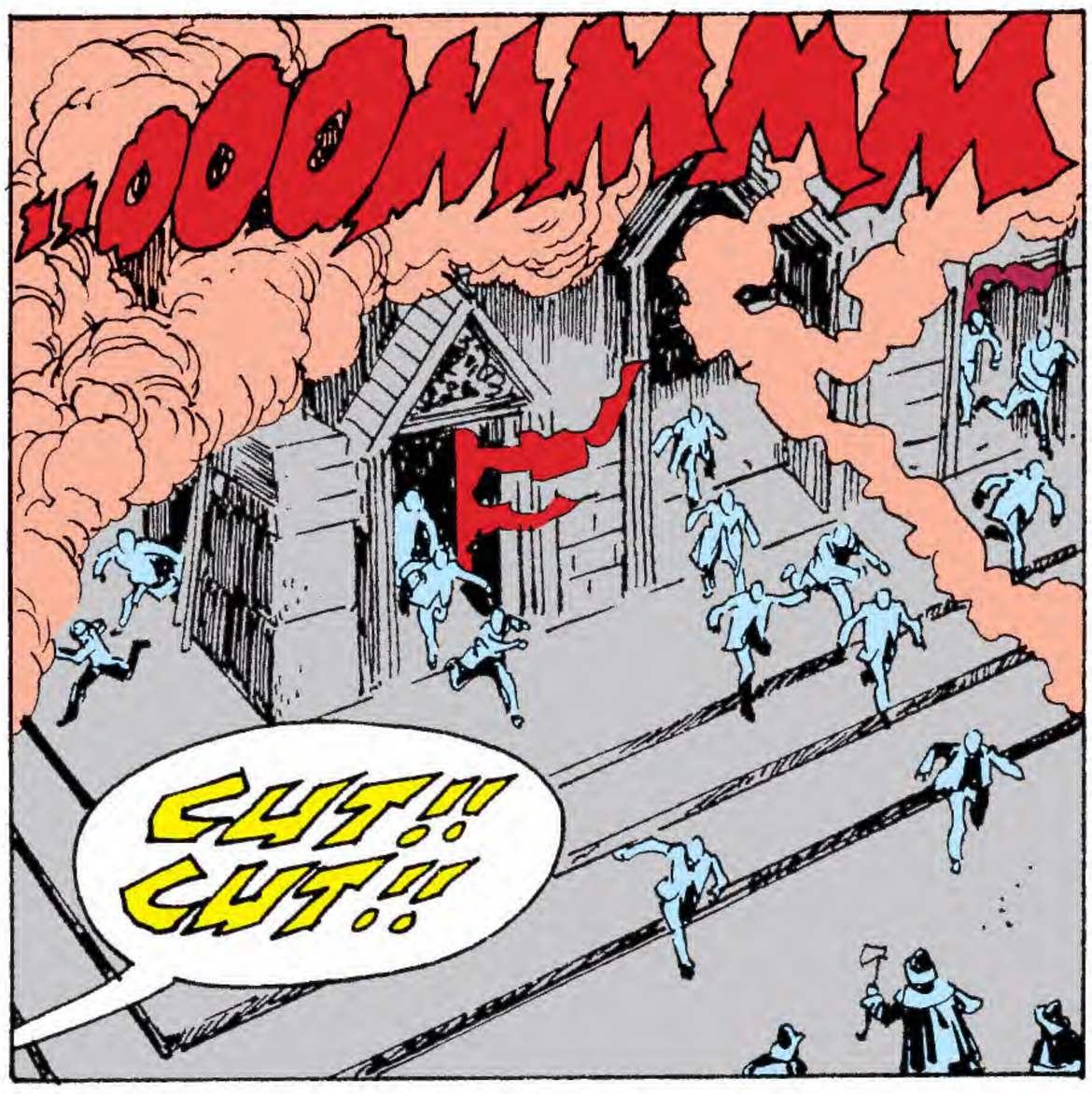
A GLORIOUS FUTURE STILL YET AWAITS YOU, MY SON!

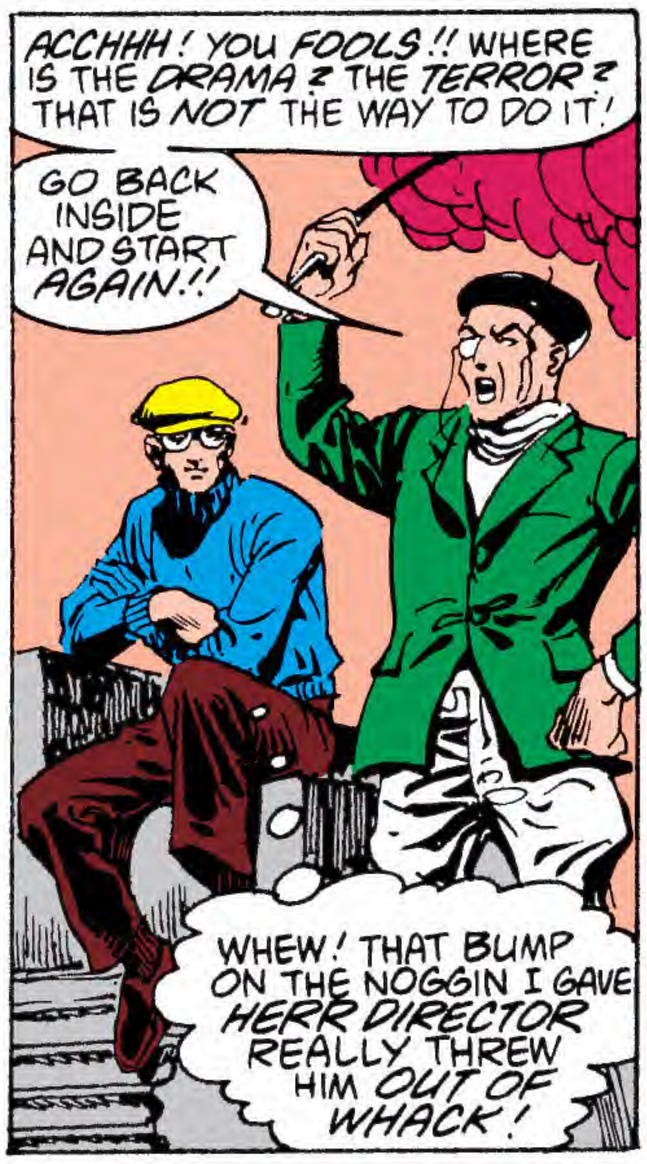
I WILL CONTINUE THE TEACHINGS OF THE REVEREND--

UNTIL THE DAY YOU *RETURN* TO YOUR PLACE AMONG THE WORLD OF MEN--

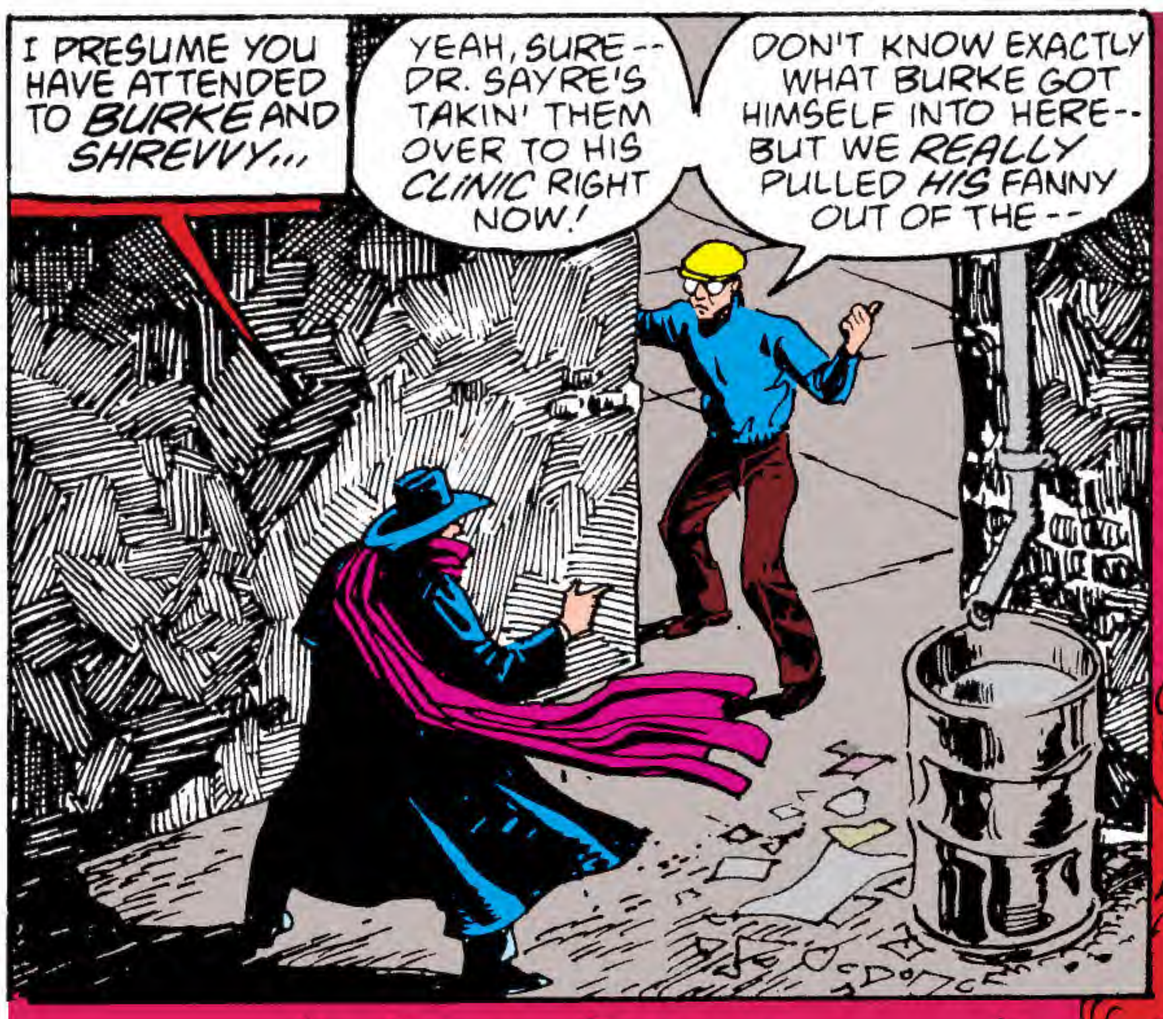
BRRKOOOOOOO..

--TO *DESTROY* THE ONE WHO *USURPED* YOUR *FIRST COMING!*

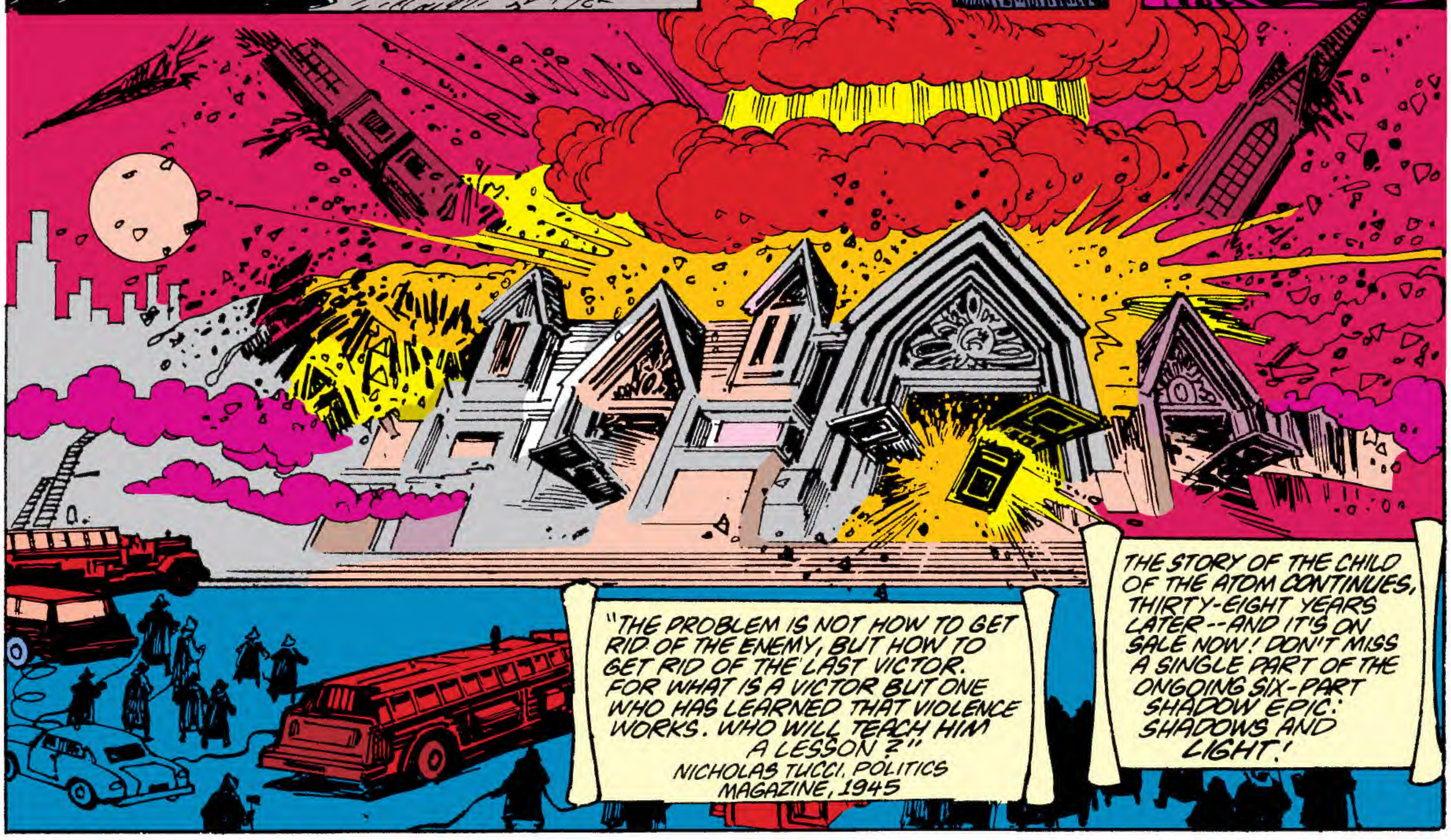












"THE PROBLEM IS NOT HOW TO GET RID OF THE ENEMY, BUT HOW TO GET RID OF THE LAST VICTOR. FOR WHAT IS A VICTOR BUT ONE WHO HAS LEARNED THAT VIOLENCE WORKS. WHO WILL TEACH HIM A LESSON?"
NICHOLAS TUCCI, POLITICS MAGAZINE, 1945

THE STORY OF THE CHILD OF THE ATOM CONTINUES, THIRTY-EIGHT YEARS LATER--AND IT'S ON SALE NOW! DON'T MISS A SINGLE PART OF THE ONGOING SIX-PART SHADOW EPIC: SHADOWS AND LIGHT!



ANNUAL #2

cover art by KYLE BAKER

NEW YORK CITY.

THREE WEEKS PAST.

EEOOOWWW
EEOOOWWW
EEOOOW

TIL EMPIRE STATE BUILDING

SCCREEEE

GOOD GOD !!!

SOMEBODY DO SOMETHING !

HE- HE'S DYING !!

SKRITCH SCRITCHH

LORD- THIS IS ALL MY FAULT...

GIVE HIM ROOM !

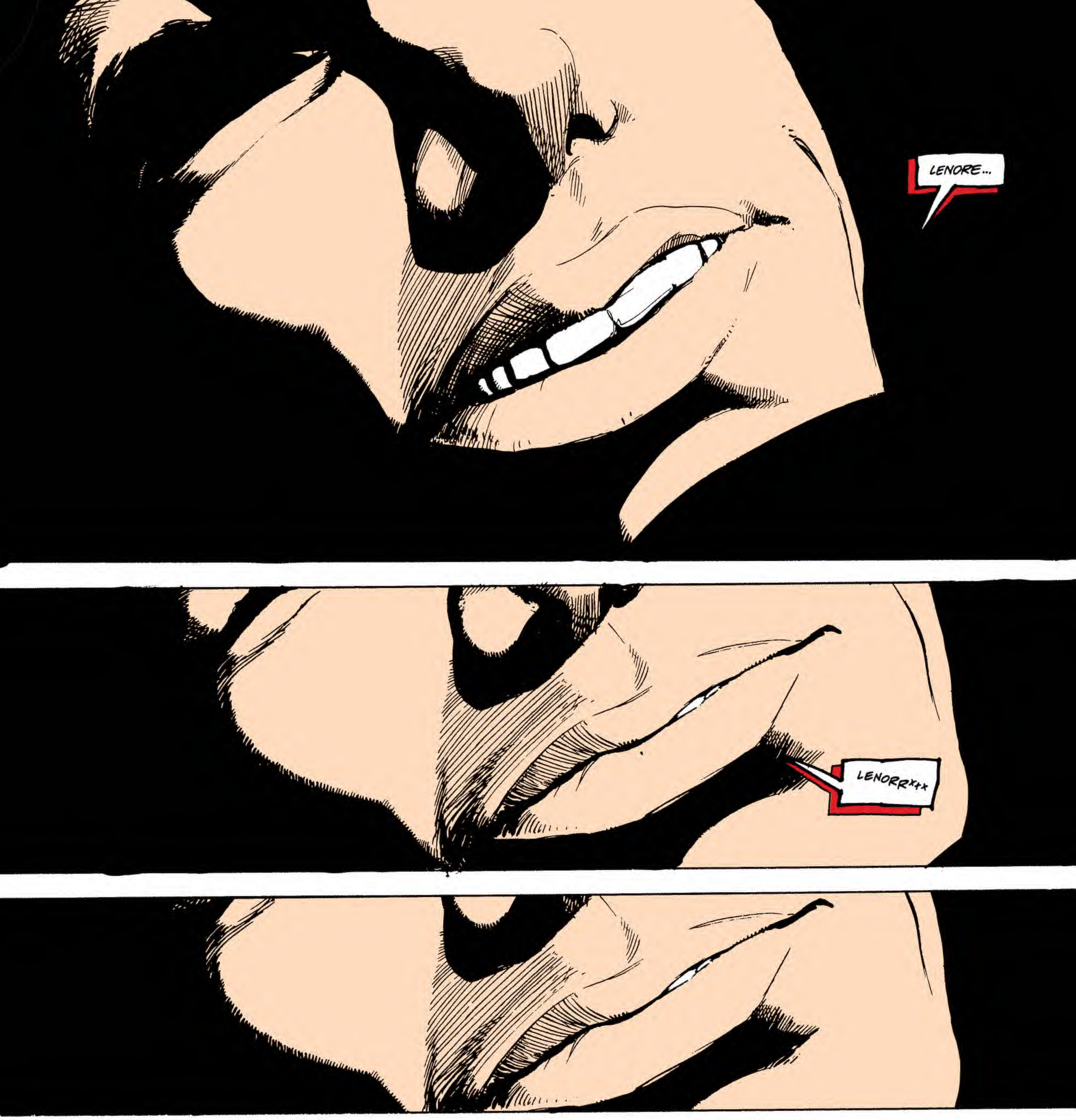
HE CAN'T BREATHE !

CAN'T YOU SEE HE'S CHOKING ?!

I- I THINK HE'S TRYING TO SAY SOMETHING...

WHAT IS IT, MASTER... ?

G·4272



AGENTS

A LESSON IN REVISIONIST HISTORY BY:

ANDREW HELFER
WORDS

KYLE BAKER
PICTURES

TIM HARKINS
LETTERS

TOM ZIUKO
COLORS

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ASSITANT EDITOR

MIKE CARLIN
EDITOR

ROLL IT!!

THIS WEEK, WE TAKE A LOOK AT THE RECENTLY DECEASED FIGURE KNOWN AS THE SHADOW--

LIVES OF THE FRESHLY DEAD

--AN INDIVIDUAL WHOSE SEEMINGLY ENDLESS WAR ON CRIME AND ITS DENIZENS HAS SPANNED OVER FIFTY YEARS.

WHO WAS THIS MYSTERY-SHROUDED CREATURE OF THE NIGHT?

WHERE DID HE COME FROM--AND WHY?

IT BEGINS IN CHICAGO, 1930... A TEAM OF CAPONE-PROTECTED JEWEL THIEVES ARE FOUND MURDERED.

THE FRUITS OF THEIR LABORS LIE SCATTERED ACROSS THE ALLEY.

POLICE ON THE SCENE ARE QUESTIONED BY THE PRESS...

BUT THE GANGSTER-OWNED AUTHORITIES OFFER LITTLE INFORMATION.

THE UNEXPLAINED CRIMINAL KILLINGS CONTINUE--MOVING FIRST FROM CITY TO CITY--THEN ACROSS THE GLOBE...

IN LENINGRAD, 1934...

OAXACA, 1935...

AND BACK TO AMERICA--IN SAN FRANCISCO'S CHINATOWN DISTRICT...

EVERYWHERE THE ANSWER IS THE SAME... NO ONE SEES ANYTHING--

--AND YET, THERE ARE SOME WHO HINT OTHERWISE...

IN 1940, A NEWSREEL CREW TRACKS DOWN CLIVE BURKE, REPORTER FOR THE NOW DEFUNCT "NEW YORK CHRONICLE..."

BURKE'S MANY CRIME STORIES SUGGEST HE HAS A DIRECT LINK WITH THE SHADOW...

BUT WHEN QUESTIONED, HIS REMARKS ARE CHILLING...

MEBBE I DO BUMP INNA HIM NOW AN' THEN--*hic*--YOU DON' WATCH YERSELF, MISHTER, YOU'RE LIABLE TA BUMB INNA HIM *TOO*...!

JOSEPH CARDONA, THEN NEW YORK'S YOUNGEST POLICE INSPECTOR, OFFERS LITTLE INFORMATION..

WELL, YOU'LL--*uh*--HAVE TO TALK TO--*um*--THE *COMMISSIONER* ABOUT THAT-

--BUT LEADS THE NEWSREEL TEAM TO COMMISSIONER WESTON, WHO RESPONDS TO CHARGES THAT A FULL HALF OF THE CITY'S MOST VICIOUS CRIMINALS WERE APPREHENDED BY THE SHADOW...

WHY, YES, IT'S--*ahem*--*TRUE*, THAT THE SHADOW... *ASSISTS* US, FROM TIME TO TIME...

But, *ahh*... WE KNOW *NOTHING* ABOUT HIM--BEYOND THE... *um*... *MINOR* SERVICES HE PERFORMS...

THE 1940 NEWSREEL PROJECT IS EVENTUALLY SHELVED FOR LACK OF INFORMATION.

BUT, WE AT "LIVES OF THE FRESHLY DEAD" MANAGED TO UNEARTH RARE PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE SHADOW IN ACTION...

THESE CANDID SHOTS DATING FROM 1935 TO 1945, WERE DISCOVERED AMONG THE PERSONAL EFFECTS OF CLIVE BURKE--

ALL FEATURE THE SHADOW COMMITTING ACTS OF UNSPEAKABLE VIOLENCE--AND PROVIDE INDISPUTABLE PROOF OF THE LINK BETWEEN BURKE AND THE SHADOW.

ANY OF THESE PHOTOS WOULD HAVE EARNED CLIVE BURKE THE PULITZER PRIZE FOR PHOTO JOURNALISM... YET, ALL REMAINED UNPUBLISHED UNTIL NOW.

WE CAN ONLY SPECULATE AS TO THE REASON WHY.

IN 1949, THE SHADOW IS FINALLY CAPTURED ON FILM, AS HE SMASHES A NEO-NAZI CULT LED BY A CHILD EVANGELIST CALLED THE LIGHT.

SOON AFTER, THE SHADOW DISAPPEARS. FOR ALMOST FORTY YEARS... NOTHING.

THEN IN 1987, THE SHADOW RETURNS: HE ENGAGES THE NOW MIDDLE-AGED LIGHT FOR A FINAL CONFRONTATION IN TIMES SQUARE.

ANGEL HEART

THE LIGHT DOES NOT SURVIVE THE ENCOUNTER.

WEEKS LATER, CLOSED CIRCUIT SECURITY CAMERAS PICK UP THESE CHILLING IMAGES AS THE SHADOW DESTROYS A DRUG PROCESSING PLANT OWNED BY SHAWN FINN--

BUT NOT BEFORE HE INVADES THE STUDIO OF A PIRATE CABLE TELEVISION STATION DEDICATED TO ILLEGAL ARMS SALES.

THIS WAS A NEW SHADOW-- SEEMINGLY THE SAME MAN, UNAGED, YET NOW ALMOST EAGER FOR THE RECOGNITION HE SHUNNED FOR DECADES.

PERHAPS IT WAS THIS VERY BOLDNESS THAT CUT SHORT THE SHADOW'S RETURN... PERHAPS HE WAS UNPREPARED TO DEAL WITH MAN'S NEWEST WEAPONS... BUT WHATEVER THE REASON, THE SHADOW IS DE-

EMPIRE STATE BUILDING.

CUT IT !!!

THIS STINKS! YOU CALL YOURSELVES PRODUCERS? HAH.-

LISSEN, YOU TWO! THIS IS A SID BAGLETON PRODUCTION, DAMMIT! I WANT MEAT ON MY SHOW-- NOT P.R. BULL!

SO YOU FOUND A FEW OLD PICTURES-- SO WHAT?! WHERE'S THE ANGLE? WHERE'S THE SWITCH?

WHY AM I GONNA WATCH THIS INSTEAD OF A "STAR TREK" RERUN ?

UMM... EXCUSE ME, MR. BAGLETON--THERE'S A YOUNG MAN OUT HERE TO SEE YOU--

MUST BE THE KID FROM THE DELI--CHRIST, THEY'RE TAKING THEIR TIME DELIVERING THESE DAYS--

NO, HE'S--

JUST SEND HIM IN-- AND TELL HIM IF THE PASTRAMI ISN'T LEAN THIS TIME, IT'S HIS ASS..

MISTER BAGLETON SIR--

WHERE'S THE SANDWICHES?!! YOU FORGOT TO BRING THE SANDWICHES!!

I NEVER SAID I HAD SAND-WICHES, SIR-- I BROUGHT INFORMATION!

YEAH... HE'S INFORMIN' US HE AIN'T GOT NO SAND-WICHES...

NO, NO-- IT'S ABOUT THE SHADOW--I HEARD YOU WERE DOING A SHOW ON HIM-- AND, WELL-- I WAS THERE WHEN HE DIED!

LOOK, KID-- FIRST YOU FORGET OUR COLD CUTS, THEN YOU COME UP WITH THIS STORY-- YOU GOT PICTURES? FILM?

ANYONE CAN SAY THEY WERE THERE-- WHERE'S THE PROOF?

WELL, IT'S NOTHING TANGIBLE... BUT HE SAID SOMETHING... JUST BEFORE HE DIED...

YEAH? WHAT WAS IT? GO AHEAD, KID-- I'M GAME. SHOOT.

WELL, I DUNNO IF I SHOULD... AT LEAST, NOT WITHOUT A CONTRACT...

HEY, WHAT AM I--LOCAL NEWS? THIS IS NETWORK, FER CRISSAKES! EVERYONE KNOWS --NETWORKS DON'T STEAL!

O.K. HE SAID... "LENORE."

OH, THAT'S GREAT. JUST GREAT.

TOO BAD HE DIDN'T SAY "NEVERMORE." THAT WOULD'A BEEN A REAL CAPPER.

CAN'T YOU SEE, MISTER BAGLETON? WHY WOULD HE SAY IT IN THE END UNLESS IT WAS IMPORTANT?! IT MUST MEAN SOMETHING!

YEAH- IT MEANS HE READ POETRY WHEN HE WASN'T BLOWING CROOKS AWAY!

ALL MASS MURDERERS READ POETRY-- MOST EVEN WRITE IT!

WAIT A SECOND SID! MAYBE THE KID HAS A POINT!

REMINDS ME OF A MOVIE I SAW WHEN I WAS A KID-- ABOUT THIS RICH OLD GUY WHO SAID SOMETHING JUST BEFORE HE DIED...

RIGHT! AND THIS REPORTER RAN AROUND TALKING TO PEOPLE, TRYING TO FIND OUT WHAT THE WORD REALLY MEANT... AND IN THE END, HE COULDN'T FIGURE IT OUT...

BUT IF HE HAD-- MAN, WHAT A STORY THAT WOULD'A MADE! THE MEANING OF A GUY'S WHOLE LIFE-- COMPRESSED DOWN TO ONE LITTLE WORD...

GIVES ME CRAMPS JUST THINKIN' ABOUT IT...

YEAH? SO TELL ME, HENRY-- EXACTLY WHAT WAS THIS WORD ?

WELL, IT WAS... REALLY RELEVANT... IT... Uhh... Umm...

HANG ON, SID... IT'S ON THE TIP OF MY TONGUE ... I --

--FUNNY. I DON'T SEEM TO REMEMBER IT...

NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT, NEITHER DO I.

BUT IT WAS A LONG TIME AGO...

THE POINT IS THAT WHATEVER THE FELLA SAID COULDN'T HAVE BEEN TOO IMPORTANT, IF NONE A' YOU REMEMBER IT, RIGHT?

SO DO US ALL A FAVOR, KID-- HOP ON DOWN TO THE DELI AND PICK US UP LUNCH-- I'M STARVED...

PLEASE, SIR! I'VE WANTED TO BE A REPORTER FOR AS LONG AS I CAN REMEMBER--AND THIS IS MY BIG CHANCE!

I KNOW IT! I CAN FEEL IT! BUT YOU'VE GOT TO GIVE ME TIME TO FIND OUT!

AHH, WHAT THE HELL... I'M FEELING GENEROUS TODAY, KID. FORGET THE SANDWICHES-- YOU'VE GOT SIX HOURS TO FIGURE OUT WHAT "LENORE" MEANS.

IF IT'S A BABE, DON'T BOTHER COMING BACK. IF IT'S A RACE HORSE, TELL MY SECRETARY, AND MAYBE I'LL PUT A FEW BUCKS ON IT NEXT WEEK.

BUT IF IT'S GOOD, YOU'LL KNOW IT. BRING IT BACK IN TIME, AND YOU'RE A REPORTER.

FAIR ?

YOU BET! YOU WON'T REGRET THIS! I SWEAR YOU WONT!

ALL RIGHT, ALREADY! JUST GET GOING! THE METER'S RUNNING!

YES, SIR! JUST YOU WAIT! YOU'LL GET AN EMMY FOR THIS ONE, SIR!

NICE BOY.

LITTLE PUSHY, IF YOU ASK ME...

SLAM

SO WHAT NOW, SID? WE WAIT ?

GIVE THE KID A CHANCE TO COME THROUGH FOR US, eh?

Nahh. THIS SHOW'S A WRAP.

WE'LL NEVER HEAR FROM THAT KID AGAIN...

"... I CAN SPOT A LOSER A MILE OFF.."

GREAT. NOW I HAVE A BUYER FOR MY STORY... ALL I HAVE TO DO IS GET THE DARN THING...

IF ANYONE KNOWS WHO LENORE WAS, IT WOULD BE THE SHADOW'S OWN AGENTS-- I JUST HOPE THEY'RE STILL TALKING TO ME!

I MEAN, IT WAS PRETTY CRUMMY OF ME TO SET THAT EYEBLITZ NEWS TEAM AFTER THEM...

ESPECIALLY SINCE THEY BUSTED UP THE SHADOW'S FUNERAL...

GUESS I MADE A MISTAKE THERE-- THE AGENTS TOOK ME IN AS ONE OF THEIR OWN, AND HOW DID I REPAY THEM? BY TURNING THEM IN!

A MAN DOESN'T DO THAT TO HIS FRIENDS -- FOR ANYTHING LESS THAN A LONG-TERM NETWORK CONTRACT...

COULD BE WORSE, THOUGH... THEY WERE ALL TOO BUSY RUNNING TO SEE IT WAS ME WHO SET THEM UP...

JUST A MINUTE - I'LL BE RIGHT TH--

OHHH NO...

I THOUGHT I HAD ALREADY MADE MYSELF CLEAR TO YOU PEOPLE-- CAN'T YOU LEAVE US ALONE?!

WE'RE BOTH THROUGH WITH YOU AND THE REST OF YOU SHADOW-MANIACS.

PLEASE, MA'AM-- YOU'RE MAKING A MISTAKE -- I'M NOT-

WHO IS IT, MARGO?

NO ONE IMPORTANT, HARRY--

IT'S ME MISTER VINCENT -- YOU REMEMBER-- RUPERT TOME?

MIND IF I HAVE A WORD WITH YOU?

WHY, CERTAINLY, YOUNG MAN!

WHERE'S YOUR SENSE OF HOSPITALITY, MARGO?

LET THE LAD IN!

DOC--DO YOU THINK I SHOULD --?

WELL... HARRY'S CONDITION SEEMS TO HAVE STABILIZED-- I SUPPOSE IT CANNOT HURT--

THAT'S IT, SON--COME ON IN-- BY GUM, YOU'RE A SIGHT FOR SORE EYES!

SO TELL ME-- HOW GOES THE WAR?

WAR--?? OH--YOU MUST MEAN... ME AND THE AGENTS...

WELL... WE'RE-- uh-- FIGHTING THE GOOD FIGHT AN'ALL... umm... KEEPING BUSY... THEY, umm... SENT ME OVER HERE... TO... FIND OUT HOW YOU WERE DOING...

ME? NOT SO GOOD!

MARGO AND DOC TAM HAVE ME UNDER LOCK AND KEY-- THEY WON'T LET ME OUT OF THEIR SIGHTS FOR A MINUTE!

SHE THINKS I'M CRAZY FOR WANTING TO KEEP FIGHTING THE MASTER'S FIGHT-- AND HE'S DOING HIS DARNDEST TO CONVINCE ME SHE'S RIGHT!

I AM RIGHT, DAMMIT! IT'S NOT NATURAL FOR A SEVENTY YEAR OLD MAN TO GO RUNNING AROUND THE STREETS HUNTING CRIMINALS!

YOU ALMOST GOT YOURSELF KILLED LAST TIME YOU WENT OUT WITH THOSE MANIACS !!!

MARGO'S CONCERN IS JUSTIFIED, YOUNG MAN! I'VE SEEN OTHERS WITH HARRY'S SYMPTOMS--

--THIS INSATIABLE NEED TO EMULATE THE SHADOW HAS BEEN THE DOWNFALL OF MANY AN AGENT!

HARRY AND I HAVE BEEN SPENDING THE LAST FEW DAYS SEARCHING FOR THE REASONS-- IN THE HOPE OF RELIEVING THIS COMPULSION OF HIS--

COMPULSION, NOTHIN!! I'VE GOT TO GET OUT THERE AND PUT THE ANIMALS IN LINE-- BY KEEPING THE SHADOW'S LEGACY ALIVE!

I MEAN-- IT'S NOT LIKE I HAVE A CHOICE IN THIS!!

SEE WHAT I MEAN?

:FAUGHH!: THIS ISN'T GETTING ME ANYWHERE! I'VE GOT A DEBT TO THE SHADOW-- AND IT'S DUE TO BE PAID!

AND THAT'S JUST WHAT I WANT TO DO, MR. VINCENT-- WRITE A TRIBUTE TO THE SHADOW'S MEMORY. THE STORY OF YOUR PAST TOGETHER--

OH, NO! WE'RE NOT GOING OVER ALL THAT AGAIN--!

OUT OUT OUT!!

BUT-- ALL I WANTED WAS--

A MOMENT, MARGO--

PERHAPS THERE CAN BE SOME THERAPEUTIC VALUE TO THIS-- PERHAPS BY GOING OVER HARRY'S PAST WITH THE SHADOW, HE CAN DRAW SOME NEW CONCLUSIONS...

IT SEEMS A TRIFLE *UNORTHODOX*, BUT THE RE-SULTS MAY INDEED BE *USEFUL*...

... AND CHEAPER THAN THE *ELECTROSHOCK* THERAPY I WAS *ABOUT* TO SUGGEST...

HARRY-- PLEASE ASSUME THE POSITION.

SURE, DOC-

YOUNG MAN--YOU WILL SIT HERE.

WELL, MR. VINCENT, I'D LIKE TO START BY ASKING ABOUT SOMEONE THE SHADOW MIGHT HAVE MENTIONED... SOMEONE NAMED *LENORE*...

YOU KNOW, IT'S FUNNY HOW CLEARLY I REMEMBER IT ALL...

"... ESPECIALLY SINCE I WAS TOTALLY SOAKED WHEN IT HAPPENED...

"IT WAS BACK IN '31... I WAS A YOUNG MAN WHO'D MADE *MORE* THAN HIS SHARE OF *BIG MISTAKES*...

"... MISTAKES THAT WERE RAPIDLY CATCHING UP TO ME.

SCREEE

"YOU SEE, ON THAT EVENING I'D GAMBLED AWAY EVERY-THING -- MONEY, PROPERTY... MY SHOES, PRACTICALLY-- IN A CHINATOWN SPEAKEASY...

"I'D TRIED TO GET *DRUNK*-- IF YOU PLAYED THE TABLES HARD AND FAST ENOUGH, THE BOOZE CAME FREE--

"-- BUT IT ONLY MADE ME SICK AS A DOG.

"AS I HEAVED MY GUTS UP AND OVER THE BROOKLYN BRIDGE, THE SOLUTION TO MY PROBLEM SUDDENLY HIT ME...

"I COULD LEAP OFF THE BRIDGE, LAND ON A PASSING STEAMER, AND START OVER AGAIN IN SOME FOREIGN LAND.

"... OR I COULD *MISS* THE BOAT, HIT THE WATER, AND END MY PROBLEMS FOR GOOD.

"GIVEN MY FRAME OF MIND, IT WASN'T MUCH OF A CHOICE."

"I REMEMBER STANDING THERE, PRAYING THERE WERE NO CRAPS TABLES IN HEAVEN...

"AND AS MY FOOT LEFT THE RAILING, I FIGURED IT REALLY DIDN'T MATTER-- I WASN'T HEADING IN THAT DIRECTION ANYWAY...

"BUT THEN--"

GAAAKK!!

WHOOMP!

JESUS CHRIST! CAN'T A FELLA KILL HIMSELF WITHOUT SOME WHITE KNIGHT COMING ALONG AND--

uhh... NOPE. ONE THING YOU'RE NOT IS A WHITE KNIGHT.

LISTEN, FRIEND--SORRY TO DISSAPPOINT YOU, BUT I'M FRESH OUT OF CASH. REALLY.

NOW, uhh... WHY DON'T YOU JUST... uh... RUN ALONG AND LET ME... GET ON WITH MY BUSINESS...

I AM NO PETTY THIEF, HARRY VINCENT. MEN CALL ME THE SHADOW.

I HAVE JUST SAVED YOUR LIFE-- FROM NOW ON, IT BELONGS TO ME.

YEAH? WELL, MAYBE I DIDN'T WANT TO BE SAVED.

YOUR CONCERNS DO NOT INTEREST ME. GET IN.

HEY! WAIT A MINUTE! I'VE GOT RIGHTS--!

ALL YOU HAVE IS THE RIGHT TO REMAIN SILENT-- AND LISTEN TO MY WORDS.

THERE IS AN EVIL IN THE WORLD, MISTER VINCENT. A LAWLESSNESS THAT GROWS BOLDER WITH EACH PASSING DAY. YOU ARE A CASUALTY OF THAT EVIL, HARRY.

YOU WILL ASSIST ME AS I WAGE WAR AGAINST IT. YOU WILL HAVE YOUR REVENGE-- WHILE I REAP A DIFFERENT KIND OF SATISFACTION.

WHAT KIND OF--

YOU DON'T WANNA KNOW, KID. JUST DO WHAT THE MASTER SAYS. YOU'LL GET USED TO HIM-- EVENTUALLY...

"YEARS LATER I FIGURED OUT HOW THE MEETING ON THE BRIDGE CAME ABOUT. ANYONE WHO'D SEEN ME GAMBLE MY LAST FEW DOLLARS AWAY WOULD HAVE SENSED THIS WAS MY SWAN SONG...

"BUT ONLY ONE OBSERVER DECIDED TO ACT ON IT-- AND SAVE ME FOR HIMSELF... HE FOLLOWED ME TO THE BRIDGE-- AND KNEW I WAS DESTINED TO BE HIS..."

"WERE THERE ANY WOMEN WITH HIM-- DID YOU GET THEIR NAMES?"

"OH, THERE MIGHT HAVE BEEN-- BUT I COULDN'T BE CERTAIN-- NOT AFTER SO MANY YEARS. I HAD OTHER CONCERNS AT THE MOMENT, YOU SEE-- FRANKLY, ONLY ONE FACE STUCK IN MY MIND...

"WE DROVE FROM THE BRIDGE TO MY APARTMENT, WHERE HE TOLD ME TO WAIT FOR FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS.

"AS I SAT THERE, I HAD SOME TIME TO MULL IT OVER-- AND THE MORE I THOUGHT ABOUT IT, THE MORE I FIGURED HE WAS RIGHT.

"I WAS A VICTIM-- AND THERE WERE **MILLIONS** OF POOR **SAPS** OUT THERE JUST LIKE ME. POWERLESS TO DO ANYTHING ABOUT THE CROOKED ROULETTE WHEELS, THE MARKED DECKS, THE LOADED DICE...

"POWERLESS TO DO ANYTHING -- BUT END OUR LIVES IN POVERTY AND DESPAIR.

"IF YOU'D BEEN THERE ON THE BRIDGE -- IF YOU COULD HAVE SEEN HIS FACE -- HIS **EYES** -- YOU'D KNOW, AS I DID, THAT HE HAD THE POWER.

"AND MORE IMPORTANT-- HE WANTED **ME** TO HAVE A PIECE OF IT.

"WHEN THE PHONE RANG, I WAS READY.

"IT WASN'T THE SHADOW-- I'D REMEMBER HIS VOICE FOREVER-- BUT I SOMEHOW **KNEW** THAT **THIS** CALLER WORKED FOR THE MASTER, TOO.

"HE INTRODUCED HIMSELF AS BURBANK-- AND GAVE ME THE ADDRESS OF A BROWNSTONE IN CHINATOWN. THE SAME PLACE I'D LOST MY FORTUNE EARLIER THAT VERY EVENING.

"HE TOLD ME TO WAIT OUT FRONT FOR A STRANGER-- I'D LEARN MY PART IN THE PLAN THEN.

"WHEN I ARRIVED, THE JOINT WAS STILL JUMPING."

"A FEW MINUTES LATER, THIS FELLA HANDED ME A WAD OF CASH THAT WOULD CHOKE A HORSE.

"FOR A SECOND, ALL I COULD SEE WAS THE STAKE. IT MUST'VE BEEN TEN GRAND-- MORE THAN ENOUGH TO PUT ME BACK ON MY FEET.

"I WAS THINKING ABOUT GRABBING IT AND TAKING OFF-- WHEN THE FELLA SPOKE UP, IN A VOICE THAT CHILLED ME TO THE BONE."

TRY AGAIN, VINCENT. THIS TIME, I'M CERTAIN YOUR LUCK WILL CHANGE FOR THE BETTER.

"IT WAS HIM, ALL RIGHT.

"AND WHAT DO YOU KNOW? HE WAS RIGHT!

"I DIDN'T KNOW HOW HE DID IT, OR WHY-- AND I DIDN'T CARE! FOR THAT NIGHT, I WAS GOLDEN."

WHAT'S GOING ON DOWN THERE, MIKE?

LOOKS LIKE SOMEONE'S ON A STREAK, BART.

AIN'T HE THAT CRYBABY WE BOOTED BEFORE-- GUY NAMED VINCENT...?

WHERE'D HE GET THE STAKE? I THOUGHT WE CLEANED HIM OUT...

AND WE SHOULD BE DOING IT AGAIN. THE TABLE'S FIXED, REMEMBER?

HE HITS BIG AGAIN, I WANT YOU TO BUST UP THAT GAME. HIM TOO.

"AFTER A WHILE, I STARTED TO GET NERVOUS. I KNEW THE MANAGEMENT WAS VINDICTIVE--A PAIR OF SHOE-SIZED BRUISES ON MY TAIL WERE A CONSTANT REMINDER.

"WHEN I HIT 22 FOR FIVE GRAND, I FIGURED IT WAS TIME TO PACK IT IN. THE CROUPIER THOUGHT OTHERWISE..."

LET IT RIDE, KID-- THE MASTER SAYS YOU'RE HOT TONIGHT...

"SO I DID..."

"AND I WAS..."

THAT'S IT. I DON'T KNOW WHAT THAT GUY *THINKS* HE'S DOING, BUT HE'S ROBBING US BLIND.

CASH IN HIS CHIPS, BOYS.

A PLEASURE, BOSS.

SO, HOW YOU WANNA WORK THIS ONE, MIKE?

NOTHIN' SPECIAL, LOU -- I'M FEELIN' A LITTLE *UNDER TH' WEATHER* T'NIGHT.

TOO BAD, I WAS LOOKIN' FORWARD TO A CHANGE OF PACE...

PRIVATE

GUESS I'LL JUST HAVE'TA SETTLE FOR GRINDIN' HIS *FACE* INTA AN UNRECOGNIZABLE PULP.

PRIVATE

PRIVATE

VINCENT'S AS GOOD AS *DEAD*...

SCHMUCK DOESN'T KNOW WHO HE'S *DEALING WITH!* BART FARWELL CONTROLS THE ACTION IN THIS CITY! I *OWN* HALF THE POLICE FORCE!

I CAN *KILL* THAT WISEGUY, STUFF MY *BUSINESS CARD* INTO THE BULLET HOLE -- AND *NEVER* EVEN GET *QUESTIONED*!

THEN THAT IS *ONE THING* WE SHARE IN *COMMON*, SCUM...

HUH?

I *TOO* HAVE BEEN KNOWN TO GET AWAY WITH *MURDER*...

... BUT THEN, *FEW* EVER MOURN *MY* VICTIMS...

... AND THOSE THAT *DO* ARE USUALLY THE *NEXT* TO DIE!

YOU GOT THE WRONG GUY, BUSTER-- I'M JUST A BUSINESSMAN-- WHADDAYA WANT FROM THE LIKES OF ME?

JUSTICE, BART FARWELL-- FOR THE DOZEN OF NAIVE YOUNG FOOLS WHO CROSSED THE THRESHOLD INTO YOUR DEN OF VICE-- AND LOST PART OF THEIR SOULS...

... JUSTICE-- FOR THE MISGUIDED WOMEN YOU USED AND DISCARDED...

... JUSTICE-- FOR THE BRAIN-DISEASED IMBIBERS OF YOUR BRUTAL GRAIN ALCOHOL...

...THEIR SPIRITS CRY OUT TO ME, BART FARWELL-- AND TELL ME THERE IS BUT ONE WAY TO HANDLE YOUR KIND...

H-HEY, LISSEN-- W-WE CAN MAKE A DEAL--

NO DEALS, FARWELL. I HAVE NEVER BEEN PARTIAL TO CARD GAMES...

... HOWEVER, I MUST ADMIT A FONDNESS... FOR A CERTAIN VARIETY OF... ROULETTE...

EVENIN', HARRY. LOOKS LIKE YOU'RE HAVIN' A GOOD NIGHT.

TOO GOOD.

uhmm.. HI, FELLAS. I WAS, uh... GETTING READY TO GO--

THAT'S RIGHT, VINCENT. TOO BAD YOU AIN'T GOT TIME TO PACK A BAG-- 'CAUSE YOU'RE GONNA BE GONE A LONG TIME...

BOSS SAYS HE'S TIRED OF YOUR GAMES, HARRY. WANNA KNOW WHAT HE TOLD US TO DO TO YOU?

uhmm... NOT ESPECIALLY...

FIRST HE SAYS TO RIP YOUR FINGERNAILS OUT... THEN BEAT YOU TO A PULP... POUR ACID ON YOUR FACE... AND END OFF WITH TWO BULLETS RIGHT BETWEEN YOUR--

BANG BANG

EYES-- ?

BOSS ??!!

OHMIGOD! GUNSHOTS!

SOMEONE'S BEEN KILLED!

I SAW HIM FALL-- OVER THERE!

HE'S BLEEDING ALL OVER THOSE--

--CHIPS!

QUIT PUSHING!!

MOVE IT! THE COPS'LL BE HERE ANY MINUTE!

SCREW THE COPS-- I'M GETTING MY MONEY BACK!

GANGWAY!

ONE SIDE! ONE SIDE!

ALL MY WINNINGS-- GONE! BUT AT LEAST I'M STILL ALIVE!

THE DEAD GUY-- IT'S FARWELL-- THE OWNER OF THE JOINT!

I DON'T GET IT! I WAS SUPPOSED TO BE HELPING THE SHADOW-- BUT ALL I DID WAS PLAY THE WHEEL!

MAYBE HE WAS TOO LATE-- MAYBE SOMEONE ELSE KILLED FARWELL! IT WOULD MAKE SENSE--

-- A MAN LIKE THAT HAS GOTTA HAVE LOADS OF ENEMIES-

"BUT AS THE WEIGHT OF THE CROWD PUSHED ME TOWARDS THE SPEAK-EASY'S DOORS, I HAPPENED TO GLANCE AROUND--

HURRY!

LEMME OUTTA HERE!

KEEP MOVING!

HA HA HA!

"-- AND SAW HIM UP THERE, ON THE BALCONY... LOOKING DOWN ON US, LAUGHING THAT TERRIBLE LAUGH OF HIS...

"I KNEW THEN THAT HE'D DONE THE JOB. WHAT I COULDN'T FIGURE OUT WAS MY PART IN IT.

"I WAS STILL THINKING ABOUT IT AS I SPEWED OUT ONTO THE STREET WITH THE MOB.

"SO I STUCK AROUND A WHILE, HOPING ONE OF THE AGENTS -- OR MAYBE THE MASTER HIMSELF-- MIGHT COME BY AND FILL ME IN ON WHAT HAPPENED.

"NOBODY SHOWED.

"I WENT HOME FEELING ROTTEN. I FIGURED I'D NEVER SEE THE MASTER AGAIN..."

FUNNY... FOR ALL MY *AMBITION*, I WAS NEVER MORE THAN A *DISTRACTION*... SOMETHING TO THROW THE BAD GUYS *OFF-GUARD* WHILE THE MASTER DID HIS STUFF..

YES, HARRY. YOU MIGHT SAY THE MASTER *USED* YOU... PLACED YOUR LIFE IN *JEOPARDY* WHILE *HE* REAPED THE *GLORY*...

NOW, THAT'S NOT *ENTIRELY* TRUE, ROY...

THERE WAS *ANOTHER* SIDE TO HIM -- *SURE*, ON THE SURFACE HE WAS *ALL BUSINESS* - BUT IF YOU COULD GET *BENEATH* THAT...

YOU MUST ADMIT, I WAS IN A POSITION TO *KNOW*. AFTER ALL, HE *WAS* MY LOVER--

YOU?! AND THE SHADOW? YOU, LIKE-- *DATED* HIM?

MUCH MORE THAN *THAT*, RUPERT -- BUT THAT'S NOT FOR PUBLICATION!

RUPERT !!!

DID HE, LIKE -- UMM.. YOU KNOW --

I MEAN, DID HE MENTION... UM... *OTHER* WOMEN? LIKE MAYBE SOMEONE NAMED LEN --

OH, HEAVENS NO! HE WAS *MUCH* TOO MUCH OF A *GENTLEMAN* TO DO THAT !

WHY, IT SEEMS LIKE ONLY YESTERDAY...

" I HAD PLANS BACK THEN -- I WAS AN ACTRESS, HOLLYWOOD BOUND.

" UNTIL MY *BIG BREAK* CAME ALONG, HOWEVER, I MADE A REASONABLE LIVING DOING RADIOPLAYS...

WOR

" ... WORKING FOR A FLEABAG ENSEMBLE CALLED THE " JUPITER RADIO THEATER..."

" WE WERE JUST BEGINNING THE 1942 SEASON WITH A PRODUCTION OF " KING LEAR..."

" I WAS PERFORMING THE ROLE OF ALL THREE OF LEAR'S DAUGHTERS...

"... WHILE MALCOLM FITCH THE THIRD, THE FAMOUS ALCOHOLIC SHAKESPEAREAN ACTOR, REPRISED HIS ACCLAIMED WEST END PERFORMANCE OF THIRTY YEARS BEFORE..."

WHAT A HAM!

"MEANTIME, WE SHALL EXPRESS OUR DARKER PURPOSE! GIVE ME THE MAP THERE! KNOW THAT WE HAVE DIVIDED IN THREE OUR KINGDOM; AND 'TIS OUR FAST INTENT TO SHAKE ALL CARES AND--"

WOR

"--BUSINESS FROM OUR AGE, CONFERRING THEM ON YOUNGER STRENGTHS, WHILE WE, UNBURDEN'D, CRAWL TOWARDS DEATH."

"OUR SON OF CORNWALL, AND YOU, OUR NO LESS LOVING SON OF ALBANY, WE HAVE THIS HOUR, A CONSTANT WILL TO PUBLISH OUR DAUGHTERS SEVERAL POWERS, THAT FUTURE STRIFE MAY BE PREVENTED NOW...

EXCELLENT... EXCELLENT...

EXCELLENT?! ARE YOU GUYS NUTS?! HE CAN'T ACT HIS WAY OUTTA A PAPER BAG! WHERE DID YOU GUYS PICK UP THAT CLOWN -- THE SALVATION ARMY?

HIS ACTING SKILLS DO NOT CONCERN US -- NOR DO YOUR OPINIONS OF THEM!

MALCOLM FITCH'S DESTINY LIES NOT ON THE WORLD STAGE -- BUT IN THE LARGER THEATER OF WORLD WAR!

"AND SO, I BESEECH -- SEARCH OUT A VESSEL OF MIGHTY ARMS, FOR THE NONCE, RETIRED TO THE HARBOR OF YORK -- WHERE IT SHALL REMAIN, AWAITING YOUR ADVANCES!"

WHAT THE HELL--?

"UPON THE MORROW, RISE UP YOUR AGENTS, AND INFILTRATE SUCH VESSEL--"

NONE OF THIS IS IN THE SCRIPT--!

"--FOR ITS CONTENTS SHALL SURELY TURN THE TIDE OF OUR DESPERATE AFFAIRS..."

WHAT'S THAT OLD RUMMY THINK HE'S--

"... AND OUR DAUGHTERS SHALL REIGN O'ER MINE KINGDOM, WELL BEYOND THE THOUSAND YEARS FORETOLD--"

--GOOD LORD!

KEERASSHH

uh...EXCUSE ME, PAL-- BUT WE'RE STILL ON THE AIR!

YOUR PERFORMANCE IS ABOUT TO CONCLUDE, FITCH... AS YOU JOIN YOUR ASSOCIATES IN HELL!

NOT JUST YET, SHADOW!

HEY, FITCH-- THIS ANOTHER ONE OF YOUR THESPIAN DRINKING BUDD--

--EEP!

STAND BACK-- OR THE FRÄULEIN GETS IT!

GO AHEAD, NAZI SCUM.

NAZI SCUM?

I DO NOT KNOW HOW YOU DISCOVERED WE WERE USING THE RADIO SHOW TO TRANSMIT OUR CODE--

--BUT IT IS A SECRET THAT WILL DIE WITH YOU AND MY CO-STAR--

BLAM!

JERK.

THE WEED OF CRIME BEARS BITTER FRUIT...

THE SWINE! HE DESTROYED OUR OPERATION-- BUT I WILL MAKE CERTAIN HE NEVER--

BONK!

WHO--?

AH. YOU NEEDN'T HAVE TROUBLED YOURSELF, MISS LANE... I SENSED HIS APPROACH...

SURE YOU DID...

SAY, YOU'RE THE SHADOW, AREN'T YOU?

'COURSE YOU ARE-- YOUR NOSE ISN'T RED ENOUGH TO BE ONE OF FITCH'S CRONIES...

AND I'M NOT EXPECTING ANYTHING FOR SAVING YOUR LIFE BACK THERE-- A SIMPLE THANKS WILL DO... MAYBE A CANDLELIGHT DINNER...

THEN, THANK YOU, MISS LANE.

AND YES-- A CANDLELIGHT DINNER DOES SEEM TO BE IN ORDER...

"THAT WAS THE START OF IT..."

SO YOU SEE, HE COULD BE A REAL CHARMER-- AND WITH ME AT LEAST, HE ALWAYS GAVE CREDIT WHERE IT WAS DUE...

MARGO, MY LOVE-- YOU NEVER TOLD ME THAT STORY...

JUST A SECOND, HARRY--SO, WHAT HAPPENED NEXT?

WELL, HE PHONED ME UP A FEW DAYS LATER... THE FACT THAT MY NUMBER WAS UNLISTED DIDN'T STOP HIM... AND THEN, WELL... I THINK I'LL SAVE THAT FOR MY BOOK...

GEE... YOU MUST'VE SPENT HOURS WITH THE GUY! DID HE TELL YOU MUCH ABOUT HIMSELF? LIKE HOW HE BECAME THE SHADOW AND ALL?

WHY, OF COURSE! WE HAD TO DO SOMETHING TOGETHER, BESIDES SOLVE CRIMES AND-

--UMM... YOU KNOW...

I DON'T BELIEVE I'M HEARING THIS...

PLEASE! GO ON--

--UHH... ABOUT THE SHADOW, I MEAN!

"BEFORE HE WAS THE SHADOW--BEFORE HE TOOK THE LAMONT CRANSTON IDENTITY FROM THAT HORRID MAN WHO WANTED TO BLOW UP NEW YORK CITY--HE WAS A GUY NAMED KENT ALLARD.

"BUT EVEN BACK THEN, HE WAS...SPECIAL.

"HE WAS A PILOT--ONE OF THE BEST.

"DURING THE FIRST WORLD WAR HE FOUGHT OVER THE BATTLEFIELDS OF GERMANY.

"HE USED TO TALK ABOUT THE EXHILARATION HE FELT UP THERE... JUST HIM AND HIS PLANE, AGAINST THE GERMAN WOULD-BE CONQUERORS.

"NO AGENTS... NO POLICE... NO LAWS OTHER THAN HIS OWN: KILL OR BE KILLED.

"HE SAID HE LOVED THOSE DAYS MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE--BATTLING IN THE SKY WAS THE PUREST, SIMPLEST EXPRESSION OF HATE HE'D EVER EXPERIENCED.

"AFTER THE WAR HE WAS REWARED FOR HIS SERVICE--AND AFTER THEY GOT FINISHED PINNING MEDALS ON HIM, THEY TOLD HIM THE PLANE WAS HIS TO KEEP.

"BUT WITH NO BATTLES LEFT TO FIGHT, HE LOST HIS SENSE OF PURPOSE. HE FLEW THAT PLANE AROUND THE WORLD, LOOKING FOR THE ACTION AND ADVENTURE THE WAR HAD GIVEN HIM...

"HE HAD NO LUCK FINDING IT--UNTIL HE LANDED IN SHANGHAI...

"IN ONE OF THAT TOWN'S SLEAZIEST BARS HE MET THAT TERRIBLE CRANSTON FELLOW...

HE OFFERED KENT A SHIPPING JOB...

"AND THE NEXT DAY, THE TWO OF THEM WERE IN THE CHINESE PROVINCE OF YEMEN, LOADING UP KENT'S PLANE WITH CRANSTON'S DISGUSTING CARGO..."

"YOU SEE, CRANSTON WAS A DRUG DEALER-- HE'D ARRANGED TO HAVE THE BODIES OF A PAIR OF DEAD MISSIONARIES GUTTED AND STUFFED WITH BAGS OF HEROIN--

"-- BUT HE NEVER BOTHERED TELLING KENT ABOUT THAT!

"ABOUT THREE HOURS INTO THE RETURN TRIP, KENT NOTICED A FUEL LEAK IN HIS PRECIOUS PLANE--BUT WHEN HE TOLD CRANSTON THEY'D HAVE TO DUMP THE CARGO TO PRESERVE FUEL --

"-- THE BASTARD REVEALED HIS TRUE COLORS...

"POOR KENT WAS HELPLESS. THE GAS GAUGE BOTTOMED OUT SOMEWHERE OVER TIBET...

"... AND SLAMMED FULL SPEED INTO THE SIDE OF ONE OF THAT COUNTRY'S BIGGEST MOUNTAINS...

"KENT KNEW HE SHOULD HAVE BEEN DEAD-- HE'D SEEN HIS ARM AND LEG GET SHEARED OFF AN INSTANT BEFORE HE LOST CONSCIOUSNESS--

B'OOM

"-- BUT WHEN HE AWOKE, HE HAD PRACTICALLY NO INJURIES...

"IT WAS AS THOUGH HE'D BEEN REASSEMBLED-- BY A TECHNOLOGY THAT WAS CENTURIES AHEAD OF OURS...

"AND IF THAT THOUGHT STAGGERED HIM...

"IT WAS NOTHING COMPARED TO THE STRANGE NEW WORLD THAT LAY RIGHT OUTSIDE HIS WINDOW--"

"--OR THE WOMAN THAT STOOD RIGHT OUTSIDE HIS DOOR...

"HER NAME WAS RUDRA CAKRIN -- THE CITY WAS SHAMBALA...

" KENT INSTANTLY FELL IN LOVE WITH BOTH OF THEM...

"BUT IT WASN'T LONG BEFORE RUDRA GOT DOWN TO BUSINESS-- SHE EXPLAINED THAT SHAMBALA WAS A SCIENTIFICALLY ADVANCED CITY-STATE, HIDDEN DEEP IN THE TIBETAN MOUNTAINS...

"SHE SHOWED HIM THEIR TECHNOLOGY... AND THEIR PROUDEST ACHIEVEMENT-- THE PALADINS.

"GENETICALLY ALTERED AND PHYSICALLY ENHANCED SOLDIERS... IN THE COMING WAR AGAINST EVIL--SHAMBALA'S INSURANCE POLICY FOR THE APOCALYPSE.

" SHE ASKED HIM IF HE WANTED TO GO THROUGH THE TRAINING-- TO BE THE FIRST TO RE-ENTER OUR SOCIETY WITH THE SKILLS SHE WOULD TEACH HIM.

"CAN YOU IMAGINE THAT? ASKING KENT ALLARD, MISTER WORLD ADVENTURER, IF HE WOULD TAKE ON A LIFE OF ADVENTURE?!

"I MEAN--HE WAS HALFWAY THERE BEFORE HE EVEN SAID YES!

"BUT RUDRA AND HER PALS FINISHED THE JOB-- SHOWING HIM HOW TO HONE HIS BODY TO PHYSICAL PERFECTION.

"WHILE TEACHING HIS MIND TO TRAVEL BEYOND HIS BODY-- TO BECOME A TRUE SHADOW WARRIOR...

"OF COURSE, OLD HABITS DIED HARD... SO WHEN HE WASN'T IN TRAINING, KENT WAS BUSY RE-BUILDING HIS PLANE, FOR THE DAY HE'D RETURN TO THE WEST...

"AND WHEN THAT DAY CAME, RUDRA GAVE HIM HER FINAL GIFT... A BLAZING FIRE OPAL THAT COULD CONTROL MEN'S MINDS...

"AND SO, HE LEFT SHAMBALA IN THAT RICKETY OLD PLANE OF HIS... TO TAKE ON THE EVILS OF THE WORLD...

"I DON'T THINK THE WORLD'S BEEN THE SAME SINCE...

"I KNOW MY LIFE HASN'T BEEN..."

LATER OF COURSE, IT ALL WENT BAD-- HE RETURNED TO SHAMBALA WITHOUT EVEN SAYING GOOD-BYE.

BUT WHEN WE WERE TOGETHER-- LORD, IT WAS SOMETHING TO SEE.

YOU KNOW-- MAYBE I HAVE BEEN TOO HARD ON HIM. IN HIS DAY, HE WAS... WONDERFUL

WONDERFUL ??

WELL, CERTAINLY A GREAT MAN-- A GREAT AND COMPLEX MAN...

TELL ME--THE LAST WORD HE SAID... "LENORE," WAS IT ?

YEAH! IT MEAN ANYTHING TO YOU ?

I REMEMBER THE MASTER SAID IT ONCE... LONG AGO... WHEN WE FIRST MET...

GO ON! GO ON!

LET ME SEE NOW... FIFTY YEARS IS A LONG TIME TO THINK BACK ON...

"I WAS A YOUNG MEDICAL STUDENT RUNNING A CLINIC IN SAN FRANCISCO'S CHINATOWN. MY COUNTRYMEN THERE WERE QUITE POOR. I BELIEVED IN DOING WHAT I COULD TO HELP.

MEDICAL

"THE RESIDENTS OF THE AREA APPRECIATED MY WORK FOR THEM...

"...THOUGH FEW COULD AFFORD TO PART WITH ANY OF THE MEAGER WAGES THEY WERE PAID IN THE FACTORIES...

"I WAS POOR, BUT I WAS HAPPY... CONTENT IN THE KNOWLEDGE THAT IF MY REWARD DID NOT COME IN THIS LIFE, IT WOULD COME IN THE NEXT...

"IF ONLY THE MEMBERS OF THE LOCAL TONG FELT AS I DID."

SREEEEH

TIME TO PAY YOUR INSURANCE, DOCTOR MAN.

臨 床 診 所
MEDICAL CLINIC
BUT I-- HAVE NOTHING TO GIVE YOU! MY CLIENTS ARE POOR PEOPLE!..
THAT IS TOO BAD, DOCTOR. BUT YOU KNOW THE RULES. IN CHINATOWN, EVERYONE PAYS THE TONG--
BLAM!
--eh?
--ONE WAY OR ANOTH--
CHU! HE'S DEAD! SHOT!
BUT-- BY WHOM?
HERE, WE HAVE NO RIVALS!
WONG! LOOK!
ATOP THE CABLE CAR! IT'S--
CLANG CLANG!
HA HA HA HA!
--YING-KO!!
BLAM BLAM BLAM!
BLAM!
ARGGGHH!!
GUCCHHGG!!
BLAM!

FOR TOO LONG HAS THE TONG HELD THE CHINESE IN ITS GRIP OF TERROR...

IT IS TIME FOR ME TO SEVER THAT GRIP-- WITH YOUR EXECUTION.

PREPARE YOURSELF, SCUM-- THIS RIDE WILL BE SHORT AND SHARP--

NO, YING-KO--

IF I DIE TONIGHT-- YOU DIE TOO--

BLAM!

MY GOD...!

I'M...SHOT.

THAT'S... NEVER HAPPENED... BEFORE...

WHUDD!

WE WILL MEET AGAIN, YING-KO--

--IN HELL--

CRUNCH

BY MY FATHER'S BEARD!

IT WAS THE SHADOW! HE SAVED ME!

BUT NOW-- HE'S WOUNDED!

INSIDE-- I CAN HELP HIM...

"SO I BROUGHT HIM INTO THE CLINIC, TO TAKE A LOOK AT HIS WOUND IT WAS BAD.

"VERY BAD."

" THE SHOOTIST HAD AIMED WELL. THE MASTER HAD BEEN GUT SHOT, WHICH ENSURED A SLOW, TORTUROUS DEATH.

" HE HAD LOST MUCH BLOOD, BUT I WORKED FEVERISHLY TO STOP THE FLOW.

" MASSIVE TRANSFUSIONS WERE CALLED FOR. BUT EVEN WITH THE NECESSARY PLASMA, THERE WERE NO GUARANTEES HE WOULD SURVIVE.

"FOR HOURS HE LAY THERE, IN WHAT I CAN ONLY IMAGINE WAS EXCRUCIATING PAIN. YET ALTHOUGH HE NEVER CRIED OUT, IN HIS DELIRIUM HE SAID A GREAT MANY THINGS.

"ONE WORD HE WHISPERED OVER AND OVER--IT WAS THE WORD "LENORE!" HE NEVER WENT FURTHER THAN THAT--BUT IT SEEMED ALMOST MANTRIC IN ITS REPETITION--

"--AS THOUGH THE WORD ITSELF EASED HIS CONSIDERABLE PAIN.

" AS I SAID, IT WAS A LONG NIGHT--BUT BY THE LIGHT OF DAWN THE MASTER HAD MADE A REMARKABLE RECOVERY.

" WEAK AND TIRED, HE MADE HIS WAY TOWARDS THE DOOR.

" I SAID NOTHING AS HE OPENED IT. I WANTED TO THANK HIM--BUT WAS UNCERTAIN OF WHAT TO SAY.

" THEN, AS SLOWLY AS HE HAD OPENED THE DOOR--HE CLOSED IT.

" I SAW HIM NOD SILENTLY TO HIMSELF, AS THOUGH HE HAD COME TO SOME MANNER OF CONCLUSION.

" THEN HE TURNED TO FACE ME-- AND HE SAID THE WORDS THAT I WILL NEVER FORGET, FOR THEY HAVE FOREVER CHANGED THE COURSE OF MY LIFE. HE SAID:

DOCTOR-- I HAVE A PROPOSITION FOR YOU...

AFTER THAT, I WAS THE MASTER'S PERSONAL PHYSICIAN-- WHEREVER HE WENT, I WAS NEVER FAR BEHIND.

I SERVED HIM FOR A FULL FIFTEEN YEARS, RIGHT UNTIL THE TIME HE LEFT THE WEST, AND RETURNED TO SHAMBALA.

NO ONE SEEMS TO KNOW WHAT HE DID THERE FOR FORTY YEARS-- BEYOND TAKING A WIFE AND HAVING TWO CHILDREN.

SINCE HIS RETURN, I OFTEN WANTED TO ASK HIM, BUT TIME WAS SO SHORT. NOW I FEAR WE SHALL NEVER FIND OUT...

THAT'S THE KEY, LOOK--HE STAYED AWAY FOR FORTY YEARS! MAYBE LENORE WAS SOMEONE HE LEFT BEHIND AND WANTED TO GET BACK TO-- SOMEONE HE MISSED TERRIBLY...

I'M AFRAID I DO NOT KNOW, RUPERT... ALTHOUGH, JUST BEFORE HE DIED, THE MASTER DID SEEM WITHDRAWN... SOMETHING DID SEEM TO BE NAGGING AT HIM...

PERHAPS IT WAS SOMETHING FROM HIS PAST IN SHAMBALA. IF IT WAS, THEN BURBANK WOULD BE THE ONE TO SPEAK TO...

HE WAS THERE WHEN THE MASTER LEFT BACK IN '49-- AND OF US ALL, HE REMAINED IN CONTACT WITH THE MASTER OVER THE YEARS...

THAT'S GREAT! IT MIGHT BE THE LEAD I'M LOOKING FOR! COULD I MEET THIS BURBANK GUY?

I SUPPOSE SO... I'VE BEEN MEANING TO CHECK UP ON HIS LADY FRIEND ANYWAY. I'M HER PHYSICIAN, YOU KNOW...

BESIDES, I BELIEVE I'VE DONE ALL I CAN FOR HARRY TONIGHT. BEST TO LET HIM MULL OVER THE EVENING'S CONVERSATIONS...

I'LL COME BY FOR OUR REGULAR SESSION TOMORROW EVENING HARRY... UNTIL THEN, PLEASE KEEP AN OPEN MIND REGARDING THE SHADOW, WILL YOU?

G'NIGHT YOU TWO-- THANKS FOR ALL YOUR HELP!

YOU KNOW, MARGO-- I'VE BEEN THINKING--

ME TOO, HARRY--

WELL, YOU GO FIRST THEN--

NO, YOU...

ALL THIS TALK ABOUT THE OLD DAYS MADE ME REALIZE I'VE BEEN OVER-- REACTING. I MEAN WHEN IT COMES DOWN TO IT, YOU'RE RIGHT! THE MASTER WAS A USER, AND A MANIPULATOR.--

SURE, IT WAS FUN, AND YES, IT WAS EXCITING--BUT LOOK AT THE HELL HE PUT ME THROUGH! HE MIGHT HAVE BEEN A HERO TO SOME BUT HE WAS JUST ANOTHER S.O.B. TO ME!

OH, DEAR...

WHAT IS IT, MARGO, MY LOVE?

IT'S JUST THAT... GOING OVER ALL THOSE OLD STORIES AGAIN... I WAS THINKING ABOUT HIM TOO... AND HE WASN'T SO BAD... AS A MATTER OF FACT... I REALLY LOVED HIM...

... AND I (SOB) MISS HIM SO MUCH...

NOT SO FAST =CHOMP CHOMP= CODY! YOU'RE LIABLE TO CHOKE ME WITH THOSE--

OOPS-- THERE'S THE DOOR! REUBEN--BE A DEAR AND GET IT FOR ME, WILL YOU?

BANG BONG! EEEP

EEEP

AH, LORELEI! AND HOW ARE WE FEELING THIS EVENING? I HOPE I'M NOT INTRUDING..

NONSENSE, DOCTOR--YOU'RE ALWAYS WELCOME HERE!

EEP EEP

I'VE BROUGHT A FRIEND OF MINE--I'M AFRAID I DIDN'T PREPARE HIM FOR YOU AND THE MONKEYS...

I BELIEVE HE'S STILL RECOVERING.

PEOPLE ARE FUNNY, THAT WAY, eh, DOC? YOU'D THINK THEY NEVER SAW A CHIMP BEFORE...

WHO'S THERE HONEY?

IT'S DOCTOR TAM, DEAR -- AND HE'S BROUGHT A NICE YOUNG MAN WITH HIM...

THE NAME'S TOME, SIR-- RUPERT TOME...

YOUNG RUPERT IS DOING A SPECIAL TRIBUTE TO THE MASTER'S WORK..

GLAD T'HEAR IT, RUPE-- 'BOUT TIME SOMEONE THOUGHT OF DOING A BOOK ON THE MASTER...'COURSE, I WOULD'A DONE IT YEARS AGO MYSELF, BUT I AIN'T TOO GOOD WITH WORDS...

SPLENDID--THEN YOU WILL KNOW EXACTLY THE KIND OF TALES RUPERT WANTS TO HEAR. NOW, WHY DON'T YOU TWO FIND A NICE, QUIET PLACE --

-- AND I'LL GIVE LORELEI A QUICK CHECK-UP WHILE YOU TALK...

FINE BY ME-- C'MON, RUPE.

RIGHT THIS WAY, FELLA--BOY, HAVE I GOT A SURPRISE FOR YOU!

WELL, HERE IT IS, RUPE-- THE NERVE CENTER OF THE SHADOW'S OLD OPERATION!

WE CONTROLLED EVERYTHING FROM RIGHT HERE-- AND THIS'S THE BEST PLACE T'HEAR ALL ABOUT IT!

PULL UP A CHAIR, RUPE -- I GOT A STORY T'TELL!

Y'KNOW, EVER SINCE I WAS A KID, I NEVER WAS NO GOOD AT READIN' AN' WRITIN.' DUNNO WHY IT WAS... THE LESSONS JUST NEVER SUNK IN TOO DEEP.

GUESS THAT'S WHY I GOT SUCH RESPECT FOR GUYS LIKE YOU-- GUYS WHO C'N WRITE DOWN WHAT IT IS THEY'RE FEELIN.'

BUT I WASN'T JUST A *DUMMY*--THERE *WAS* SOME THINGS I WAS GOOD AT... MOSTLY IN THE WAY O' *BUILDIN'* THINGS-- 'LECTRONIC THINGS.

TAKE THIS *HAM RADIO*, F'RINSTANCE-- BUILT IT WHEN I WAS FIFTEEN! AND NOT FROM A *KIT*, NEITHER-- IT WAS FROM *SCRATCH*!

I LISTENED TO THIS BABY FOR MORE'N FIFTY YEARS--THE WEIRD THING IS, I OWE MY *WHOLE LIFE* WITH THE MASTER TO IT!

"SEE, I USE'TA SPEND HOUR AFTER HOUR USIN' IT TA TALK TO FOLKS ALL OVER THE WORLD... SOME NIGHTS, I DIDN'T GET ANY SLEEP AT ALL.

"THEN ONE NIGHT, THE DARNDEST THING HAPPENED..."

BURBANK... LISTEN TO ME... I NEED YOUR ASSISTANCE...

"IT WAS NUTS--NO ONE EVER USED NAMES ON THE HAM FREQUENCIES, ONLY CALL LETTERS--BUT HERE WAS THIS GUY THAT KNEW WHO I WAS-- AND LOTS MORE ABOUT ME!

"I WAS SPOOKED REAL GOOD AT FIRST, WHEN HE STARTED GIVIN' ME ORDERS, TELLIN ME TO GO PLACES AND DO STUFF FOR HIM...

"BUT AFTER A WHILE I GOT USED TO IT--AND STARTED DOIN' WHAT HE SAID... AFTER ALL, THERE WEREN'T NO REAL JOBS BACK THEN... SO I FIGURED, WHAT THE HELL...

"HECK... I SNUCK INTO APARTMENTS AND BUGGED TELEPHONES...

"INSTALLED TRACERS UNDER THE BODIES OF MOB BIGWIG CARS...

"AND WHEN THE MASTER FIGURED OUT WHAT MY REAL TALENTS WERE, HE HAD ME PUT TOGETHER A SWITCHBOARD FOR HIS AGENTS.

THEY ALL CALLED IN REAL REGULAR-LIKE... AND THE MASTER HAD ME GIVE'EM THEIR ORDERS FOR THE NIGHT.

IT WAS GREAT-- A DREAM COME TRUE...

"BUT NOTHIN' BEATS THE DAY I GOT THE CHANCE TO MATCH THE VOICES WITH THE FACES-- WHEN THE SHADOW INVITED ME TO THIS BIG AGENTS MEETIN' HE HAD SET UP...

"NOW THAT WAS SOMETHIN' I'LL NEVER FORGET..."

AN' THAT'S THE WAY IT WENT-- RIGHT UP UNTIL THE WINTER OF '49. Y'SEE, HE'D BECOME KINDA *DISTANT*... ONLY CALLIN' IN EVERY NOW AN THEN ... AT FIRST I FIGGERED HE JUST WANTED TO BREAK AWAY FROM US... LIKE, GO SOLO.

BUT THAT WEREN'T IT AT ALL...

HE RANG ME UP ONE NIGHT AN' ASKED ME TO MEET HIM. SOMETHIN' WAS UP-- THE MASTER NEVER *ASKED* US TO DO *ANYTHING*...

"... HE JUST ORDERED US AROUND LIKE HE *OWNED* US. WE NEVER MINDED, THOUGH... THAT WAS JUST HIS WAY OF DOIN' THINGS...

"JUST LIKE *CREEPING* UP BEHIND US WAS JUST HIS WAY OF INTRODUCIN' HIMSELF..."

HI, MASTER. WHAT'S UP?

BAD NEWS, I'M AFRAID. I'M LEAVING, OLD FRIEND. SOMETHING HAS COME UP IN SHAMBALA-- IT REQUIRES MY IMMEDIATE ATTENTION.

YOU WON'T BE SEEING ME AGAIN, BURBANK. BUT I WANTED TO THANK YOU BEFORE I LEFT. OF ALL MY AGENTS, *YOU* WERE THE MOST FAITHFUL.

FAREWELL, BURBANK.

WE'VE DONE GOOD *WORK*, YOU AND I... AND IF *JUSTICE* IS AS PURE AND NOBLE AS I BELIEVE, I'M CERTAIN WE'LL MEET AGAIN...

... AT THE GATES OF A *BETTER* PLACE...

"I TRIED TO SAY SOMETHING... ANYTHING-- BUT THE WORDS JUST WOULDN'T COME.

"WHAT COULD I SAY? I MEAN, HE WAS MY *LIFE*! AND THERE HE WAS, WALKING *OUT* OF IT!

"IT WAS HARD, BUT IN THE END, I FIGURED THAT LIFE HAD TO GO ON... NO MATTER HOW EMPTY IT SEEMED...

"I GOT A JOB AT THE PHONE COMPANY... REPAIRING LINES, INSTALLING PHONES, STUFF LIKE THAT...

"SOON AFTER, I MET LORELEI.

"IN HER OWN WAY, SHE TAUGHT ME MORE THAN THE SHADOW DID. WE STARTED TO BUILD A LIFE...

"... BUT I NEVER GAVE UP LISTENIN' TO THE OLD HAM RADIO... OR HOPIN' FOR THE DAY THE ADVENTURE WOULD BEGIN AGAIN...

"BUT WHEN IT FINALLY DID, I WASN'T NEAR PREPARED FOR IT! IT WAS TEN YEARS LATER... BUT IT HARDLY FELT A DAY..."

=CRRRZZZT= BURBANK... ARE YOU THERE? =CRRRZZZT=

PAUGHHHH!!

COME IN, BURBANK, =CRZZZTT=

IS THAT --?

YES, BURBANK... IT'S ME. BEEN A WHILE, eh?

Y-YEAH... Uhh... WHAT CAN I... DO FOR YOU?

JUST... TALK TO ME. TELL ME WHAT I'VE MISSED... WHAT'S HAPPENED TO THE WORLD SINCE I LEFT IT.

"AND I DID. EVERY NIGHT I READ HIM THE PAPERS, COVER TO COVER--THE FUNNIES EVEN... BUT HE ALWAYS WANTED MORE.

"IT WENT LIKE THAT FOR MORE THAN TWENTY YEARS... AND THEN, IN 1980, HE MADE A SPECIAL REQUEST...

"I WAS TO PICK UP A MAN AT AN AIRFIELD IN NEW JERSEY--AND FOLLOW HIS INSTRUCTIONS AS I WOULD HAVE FOLLOWED THE MASTER'S OWN...

"I THOUGHT I WAS READY FOR ANYTHING--WITH THE MASTER YOU HAD TO BE--

"ANYTHING... BUT THIS..."

MASTER...?

IN THE FLESH, BURBANK. SURPRISED?

SURPRISED! OH, MASTER =shif= YOU DON'T KNOW HOW I MISSED YOU-- ALL THOSE YEARS I--

NO TIME FOR THAT, BURBANK. START THE CAR--I HAVE WORK TO DO.

I CAN FEEL IT, BURBANK. WE ARE ON THE EVE OF WAR... A WAR AGAINST EVIL THAT WILL DEVASTATE THIS CONTINENT... UNLESS I CAN BEAT IT BACK INTO THE DARKNESS.

AND I MUST BE PREPARED. NEW AGENTS MUST BE RECRUITED--THE ORIGINALS HAVE GROWN OLD AND INFIRM...

BUT YOU, ON THE OTHER HAND, LOOK SWELL-- AS GOOD AS THE DAY YOU LEFT!

WHAT IS IT? VITAMINS? ME AN' THE OTHER OLD-TIMERS SURE COULD USE A DOSE, IF YOU GOT ANY EXTRA...

COME TO THINK OF IT... HOW *DID* HE DO IT... I MEAN, THE GUY MUST'VE BEEN CLOSE TO NINETY WHEN HE DIED--

--BUT HE DIDN'T LOOK A DAY OVER *FORTY!*

IF HE GAVE YOU THE *FORMULA*, WE COULD BOTTLE IT AND MAKE A *FORTUNE!*

'FRAID IT WASN'T A *FORMULA* THAT DID IT... IT WAS THE *AIR* IN THAT SHAMBALA PLACE HE LIVED IN. HE TOLD ME THAT *NOBODY* EVER GETS OLD THERE.

TOO BAD YOU CAN'T BOTTLE *AIR*...

YEAH-- I GUESS... BUT, ANYWAY... LIKE I WAS SAYIN'...

"HE TOLD ME TO TAKE HIM TO THIS OLD BAR ON THE WATERFRONT... ONE'A THEM JUKE JOINTS FROM THE OLD DAYS... AND THEN...

YOU MAY GO NOW, BURBANK. I WON'T BE NEEDING YOUR SERVICES FROM HERE ON.

BUT-- AREN'T YOU STAYING ?

BLACK MIKE'S

BLACK MIKE'S BAR

NOT YET, BURBANK. BUT BE *PATIENT*--

--SOON THE WAR WILL BEGIN ANEW...

HE MUST'VE GONE BACK HOME AFTER THAT, CAUSE WE STARTED TALKIN' ON THE *HAM RADIO* AGAIN... BUT *THIS* TIME HE MADE ME AN' LORELEI RELAY ORDERS TO A *NEW* BUNCH OF AGENTS...

WHEN HE CAME BACK LAST YEAR, I *THOUGHT* IT WAS *PERMANENT*... BUT NOW HE'S GONE... FOR GOOD...

BUT, HECK-- I WOULDN'T BE A *BIT* SURPRISED IF, ONE OF THESE DAYS, WHEN I LEAST 'EXPECTED IT, HE CAME BACK *AGAIN!*

I WOULD...

BUT HE NEVER MENTIONED A *WOMAN*...? SOMEONE NAMED *LENORE* ?

NO, I DON'T THINK SO--

THIS ISN'T GETTING ME *ANYWHERE*... AND TIME'S RUNNING *OUT!*

IF ONLY I HAD ACCESS TO HIS PRIVATE *PAPERS*... BUT HIS *HEADQUARTERS* WAS CLEANED OUT AFTER HE DIED...

WELL, *ONE OF THEM* WAS...!

ONE OF THEM ? YOU MEAN... THERE'S *ANOTHER* ?

SURE! UNDER *TIMES SQUARE*... THAT WAS HIS *REAL* HQ... CARE TO TAKE A LOOK AT IT?

THIS IS REALLY QUITE AN EXPERIENCE FOR ME, BURBANK. IN ALL MY YEARS OF SERVICE, I'D NEVER *IMAGINED* THE MASTER HAD *ANOTHER* BASE OF OPERATIONS...

YEAH, WELL, HE NEVER TOLD ANYONE ABOUT IT... EXCEPT FOR ME, OF COURSE. I USED TO COME BY EVERY TUESDAY AND TIDY UP..

Heh... HE WAS A LITTLE SLOPPY SOMETIMES... BUT HEY... I WAS A *BACHELOR* TOO, ONCE...

NOW, RUPERT--YOU GOTTA *PROMISE* NOT TO TELL *ANYONE* 'BOUT THIS PLACE-- AFTER THE *FLATIRON* HQ GOT RAIDED, I GOT TO BE CARE-FUL...

SCOUTS HONOR, MISTER BURBANK! I WON'T TELL A--

CLK CLK CLK

--SOUL--?

OH DEAR.

CHRIST! DOESN'T ANYONE CALL FIRST ANYMORE?!

BURBANK! WE NEARLY *BLEW YOUR HEAD OFF*!!

BUT YOU *DIDN'T*, AND *THAT'S* WHAT *COUNTS*! NOW, IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME--

I'M A LITTLE *PRESSED* FOR TIME, AND I'VE *GOT* TO LOOK THROUGH THE SHADOW'S PERSONAL FILES!

AND SINCE THERE SEEM TO BE SO *MANY* OF THEM, I SHOULD GET STARTED *PRONTO*--

I... *uh*... WOULDN'T *DO* THAT IF I WERE YOU, RUPERT...

WHY NOT? I MEAN--THE GUY'S DEAD! I'M *SURE* HE WON'T BE *OFFENDED*...

NO... BUT THE MASTER *VALUED* HIS *PRIVACY*--

I GUESS THAT'S WHY HE *WIRED* THOSE CABINETS TO *EXPLODE* IF THEY WERE EVER TAMPERED WITH...

eep!

I GIVE UP! THIS IS HOPELESS !!!

AY, KID... YOU HAVIN'A BAD DAY OR WHAT ?

C'MON IN THE BACK WID ME... GOT ME A BOTTLE OF THE MASTER'S 50-YEAR OLD SCOTCH... COUPLE 'A TUGS ON THAT'LL CHEER YOU UP REAL QUICK--

THANKS, MR. PEREZ-- BUT I DON'T NEED A DRINK! I NEED INFORMATION !!

I'VE GOT TWO HOURS TO FIND OUT WHAT LENORE MEANT TO THE SHADOW--MY CAREER IS ON THE LINE!

LENORE, huh? Ahh... IT WAS PROB'LY A NICKNAME FER THE MASTER'S FAVORITE GUN... THAT WAS THE ONLY THING HE EVER LOVED, FAR AS I COULD FIGGER...

THINK, SIR-- THINK! GO ALL THE WAY BACK--TRY TO REMEMBER HIM SAYING THAT WORD !!

Y'SEE, THE SHADOW AN' MY POP HAD WHATCHA MIGHT CALL A RELATIONSHIP...

POP WASN'T AN AGENT, EXACTLY... HE WAS MORE LIKE A WHIPPING BOY...

JEEZ... ALL THE WAY BACK, huh...? THOSE MEM'RIES GIVE ME THE WILLIES !!

"EVERY NIGHT, THE SHADOW WOULD WALTZ INTO POP'S SALOON, LOOKIN' FER INFORMATION...

"AN' EVERY MORNIN' BLACK MIKE PEREZ WOULD STAGGER HOME WID A NEW BRUISE TA SHOW OFF TO HIS LIDDLE SON...

"HE TOL' ME ALL ABOUT THE MASTER... OVER AN OVER AGAIN... A MILLION TIMES, IT SEEMED... PRACTICALLY SCARED ME OUTTA MY HEAD...

"GUESS THE SHADOW DIDN'T CARE MUCH FER POP... NOT AS I BLAMED HIM...

"HE WAS A PRETTY SLEAZY GUY...

"WHEN POP FINALLY KICKED THE BUCKET--OF NATCHERAL CAUSES, MIND YA--HE LEFT HIS BAR PLACE TA ME, MAINLY 'CAUSE NOBODY ELSE WANTED IT...

"BLACK MIKE'S WAS A GREAT OLD PLACE... BREW RAN LIKE WATER... SMOKE FILLED THE AIR... AND THE CUSTOMERS WERE MY KIND O'PEOPLE...

"'TILL THE DAY HE WALKED IN..

"I'D FERGOT ABOUT HIM, SINCE HE KINDA' WINKED OUT BACK IN '49... BUT HERE IT WUZ 1980, AND THERE HE WUZ... JUST THE SAME AS POP USE'TA DESCRIBE 'IM...

"LEMME TELL YA, HE CLEANED THE JOINT OUT QUICKER'N A CAN 'O RAID... THE OLD TIMERS RAN THE FASTEST...

"BUT I REMEMBER THERE WUZ THIS BABE HAD ANUDDER IDEA...

"SHE STARTED COMIN' ON TA 'HIM... MAKIN' LIKE HE WAS JUST ANNUDER JOHN..."

"WHAT WAS HER NAME, DEWITT? COULD SHE HAVE BEEN LENORE--?"

"FERGET THE BABE ANGLE, KID... IT JUST DON'T WASH...

"I THOUGHT I WAS GONNA LOSE IT RIGHT THERE-- I HAD A BELLYFUL, Y'UNDERSTAND-- BUT HE SADDLED RIGHT ON UP TO THE BAR, LOOKED ME STRAIGHT IN THE EYE, AND SAID:

CAN WE TALK?

"WELL, TALKIN' WAS THE LAST THING I EXPECTED OUTTA THE SHADOW-- SO WE WENT INTA THE BACK, WHERE IT WAS NICE 'N QUIET... "

DEWITT PEREZ... I KNEW YOUR FATHER WELL... THERE WERE MANY TIMES I WAS TEMPTED TO KILL HIM... BUT I... REFRAINED. WE MADE A DEAL.

YOU WERE THAT DEAL IN EXCHANGE FOR HIS LIFE... HE PROMISED ME YOURS.

"THAT SOUNDED LIKE POP... "

SOON I WILL RETURN TO AMERICA TO STAY--AND I NEED TO BE READY. YOU WILL BE THE FIRST OF MY OPERATIVES... YOUR COMPATIBILITY WITH THE UNDERWORLD WILL MAKE YOU INVALUABLE.

BUT I NEED MORE AGENTS... MORE SPECIALISTS... AND YOU WILL LEAD ME TO THEM...

"I THOUGHT ABOUT IT FOR A SECOND... BESIDES A LITTLE ATTYTUDE PROBLEM, HE SEEMED LIKE A PRETTY DECENT JOE.

"RIGHT AWAY, I KNEW THE KINDA GUY HE WUZ LOOKIN' FOR...

PERHAPS I AM MISSING SOMETHING, DEWITT...

BUT I FAIL TO SEE HOW A WRESTLING MATCH WILL FURTHER MY ENDS...

SEE THAT GUY IN THE RING? HE'S YOUR MAN!

DEWITT... YOU MISS THE POINT. I AM NOT INTERESTED IN ANY ADDLE-BRAINED, MUSCLE-BOUND--

NO, NO! NOT DA WRESTLER- --CHECK OUT 'IS TRAINER!

HIM? THAT JITTERING BUNDLE OF NERVES?

THAT'S YOUR IDEA OF A POTENTIAL AGENT?!

PERHAPS I WAS TOO HASTY IN SELECTING YOU, DEWITT--

HEY! THE GUY'S A WIZARD! JUST WATCH 'IM! ONCE HE GOES INTA ACTION, YOU WON'T BE DISAPPOINTED-- PROMISE!

LAYDEEZ AND GENNULMEN! FOR YOUR AMUSEMENT AND EDIFICATION, THIS EVENING'S MAIN ATTRACTION--A TITLE MATCH FOR THE GLOBAL WRESTLING CHAMPEENSHIP!

IN THE LEFT CORNER, THE CHAMPEEN--WEARING BLACK BODY SUIT AND POLY/COTTON SKI MASK--MAD DOG MAGOON!

IN THE RIGHT, THE CHALLENGER-WEARING PRACTICALLY NOTHING AT ALL--BEE-YOU-TIFUL BOB!

[redacted]

AT THE SOUND OF THE BELL--COME OUT FIGHTING!

DING

REARGGHHH

SLAM!

--OOPS...

HEY, TAKE IT EASY, GUY--YOU DON'T HAVE TO--

I BELIEVE I'VE SEEN ENOUGH...

WAIT! WAIT! WATCH THE LITTLE GUY--HE'S GONNA DO IT!!

NEARRGGHH!!

WHUH-WHUH-WHUH-WHUH

C'MON BOB! THIS WAY...

HERE YOU GO--

AARRRGHHH!!

THAT'S THE SPIRIT, ROBERT--

--NOW GO AND GET HIM!!

BOB--YOU FEELING OKAY?

-RRRR-

WAIT A SECOND! YOU'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO--

NARRGH! NARRGH! NARRGH!

I GIVE! I GIVE!!

GGG RRR rrr

SEE--WHA'D I TELL YA!

YES... HE *DOES* SEEM RATHER SKILLED IN ADVANCED *MOTIVATIONAL* TECHNIQUES...

PERHAPS I WAS A TRIFLE *HASTY*... IT WOULD APPEAR THAT *FURTHER CONSIDERATION* IS IN ORDER...

YOU SEE, ROBERT? I ALWAYS KNEW YOU HAD IT IN YOU--YOU SIMPLY NEEDED A LITTLE PUSH IS ALL!

WE SHOWED THEM, DIDN'T WE? YOU'RE NOT JUST ANOTHER PRETTY FACE ANYMORE--NOW YOU'RE A CHAMPION!

I SUSPECT THAT WILL COME AS QUITE A SURPRISE TO YOU... ONCE YOU'RE COHERENT AGAIN...

I KNOW I PUT THE COUNTER-PILLS IN HERE SOMEWHERE--AH!

HMMM... WELL, IT'S ONE OF THESE, ANYWAY...

KNOCK KNOCK

HELLO, TWITCH... FUNNY THING ABOUT THAT MATCH, eh?

YOU HAPPEN T'NOTICE THAT THE WRONG GUY WON?

WE LOST FIFTY GRAND T'NIGHT, TWITCH... AND WE GOTTA TAKE IT OUT ON SOMEBODY!

BUSINESS IS BUSINESS, Y'KNOW...

CAN'T BLAME BOB, THOUGH... HE STILL HASN'T FIGURED OUT WHAT HE DONE.

THAT LEAVES YOU...

HAHAHA

WHAT'S SO FUNNY, YOU STUPID--

HOHAHAH

BLAM BLAM BLAM BLAM

--MUG--

JESUS!! HE'S CRAZY!!

DEPENDS ON WHERE YOU'RE STANDING, VINCENT...

WHAT THE HELL'S--

--VINNIE--?

OUTTA MY WAY!!

OOFFF!

OH, NOT YOU DON'T--!

SLAM!

I'VE HAD IT WITH YOU GUYS-- YOU HEAR ME?!

FIRST YOU SET ME UP AS CHAMP... THEN YOU PUT ME IN THE RING WITH THAT... THAT... ANIMAL... AND NOW I CATCH YOU TRYING TO TAKE OFF WITH MY PIECE OF THE PURSE!

THERE'S GOT TO BE A BETTER WAY FOR A GUY TO WORK HIS WAY THROUGH TEACHER'S COLLEGE THAN THIS!

HMM... NOW THAT YA MENTION IT... I THINK I GOT ONE WAY FOR YA...

AND WHAT WOULD THAT BE?

FIRST I GOTTA CHECK WID DA BOSS-- SEE IF YA QUALIFY.

THIS WAY, uh-

ELTON... ELTON BUTTERFIELD-- FORMERLY MAD DOG MAGOON...

TWITCHKOWITZ. I SAVED YOUR LIFE... YOU OWE ME ONE IN RETURN.

I SUPPOSE IT'S AS GOOD A CAREER CHANGE AS ANY... SINCE I DOUBT MY REPUTATION IN THE WRESTLING WORLD WILL SURVIVE THIS LITTLE INCIDENT...

DO NOT TAKE MY OFFER LIGHTLY, TWITCH. YOU HAVE BEEN SELECTED FOR YOUR UNIQUE SKILLS TO JOIN AN ELITE GROUP OF OPERATIVES... OF THE WORLD'S POPULACE, A MERE HANDFUL ARE CHOSEN TO--

HEY MASTER! HERE'S ANNUDER ONE FOR YA!

BY THE TIME HE'D FINISHED HIS RECRUITIN', WE WERE HALF A DOZEN STRONG... AN' THEN THE MASTER JUST UP AND DISAPPEARED! DIDN'T SEE HIM AGAIN FOR SEVEN WHOLE YEARS!

BUT ALL DURIN' THAT TIME WE WUZ GETTIN' CALLS FROM BURBANK AND LORELEI--DIRECT ORDERS FROM THE MASTER T'DO ALL KINDS 'A THINGS... AN' EVERY WEEK THE MASTER'S ACCOUNTANT WOULD COME BY WITH PAY-CHECKS LIKE YOU WOULDN'T BELIEVE!

BUT... WHAT DOES ANY OF THIS HAVE TO DO WITH LENORE?

LENORE? WHO'S LENORE?

LENORE! LENORE! THE SHADOW'S LAST WORD!

I'VE GOT TO KNOW WHAT IT MEANT!

HELP ME, ELTON!

IF I KNEW, I'D TELL YOU, RUPERT, BUT I--

I KNOW YOU KNOW!

PLEASE... I WANNA BE A TV REPORTER SO BAD...

HEY! THAT REMINDS ME-- WHAT TIME IS IT?

TEN O'CLOCK, DEWITT-- WHY?

DAMNIT! IT'S ALMOST OVER!

EMPIRE STATE BUILDING

WHILE WE MAY NEVER KNOW WHO THE MYSTERIOUS AVENGER WAS, WE WILL ALL REMEMBER WHAT HE STOOD FOR... JUSTICE, IN ITS PUREST, MOST BRUTAL FORM...

AND SO, UNTIL NEXT WEEK, THIS IS SID BAGLETON FOR LIVES OF THE FRESHLY DEAD WISHING YOU A GOOD NIGHT--

--AND A LIVELY TOMORROW...

AH, WHOT THE HELL... I'CN ALWAYS CATCH IT IN RERUNS...

OVER?! IT'S... OVER?!! THEN-- THEY LIED TO ME! THEY DIDN'T WAIT!

HOW COULD THEY DO THIS TO ME??!

HOW!??

JEEZ, KID-- RELAX! IT'S ONLY A TEEVEE SHOW!

THE STORY OF THE CENTURY-- AND I BLEW IT!

I'LL NEVER BE A REPORTER NOW...

MY CAREER... MY LIFE...

:SOB: RUINED!

RUPERT... I DON'T THINK YOU'VE GOT A HEALTHY ATTITUDE ABOUT THIS...

IT WOULD APPEAR THE BOY HAD A GREAT STAKE IN THE SECRET OF THIS LENORE...

YEAH? I GOT SOMETHIN' THAT'LL FIX THAT!

WHADDAYA SAY WE BUY THE KID A BURGER... I KNOW THIS ALL NIGHT JOINT MAKES THE GREASIEST...

GOOD IDEA, DEWITT... IF LORELEI GETS ANY WORD FROM DICK MAGNET ON TWITCH OR THAT INOCULATOR, WE'LL FIND OUT ABOUT IT SOON ENOUGH...

BESIDES, WE COULD ALL USE A BREAK FROM THIS ENDLESS WAITING...

:SNFF: Y-Y'ES MA'AM...

COME ALONG NOW, RUPERT...

YOU COMIN' DOC?

NO, DEWITT-- I BELIEVE I'LL REMAIN HERE... THIS PLACE... IT MAKES ME FEEL SO CLOSE TO THE MASTER... AND THE MEMORIES... ARE COMFORTING AT THIS LATE HOUR... .

I KNOW WHAT YA MEAN, DOC -- THE MEM'RIES CAN BE PRETTY SWEET.

HE WAS A GREAT MAN, DEWITT...

A GREAT AND COMPLEX MAN...

IMAGINE... SEARCHING SO DESPERATELY FOR THE MEANING OF A SINGLE WORD... ... AS IF THAT ALONE COULD UNLOCK THE MYSTERY OF THE MASTER'S LIFE...

... AS IF IT COULD EXPLAIN THE REASONS FOR HIS VERY EXISTENCE.

FOOLISH CHILD.

WHY THE MASTER WAGED HIS WAR AGAINST EVIL IS SOMETHING WE WILL NEVER KNOW... NO ONE WORD WILL EVER REVEAL THAT.

... BUT ONE THING IS CERTAIN... HE FOUGHT THE GOOD FIGHT... RIGHT UNTIL THE VERY END...

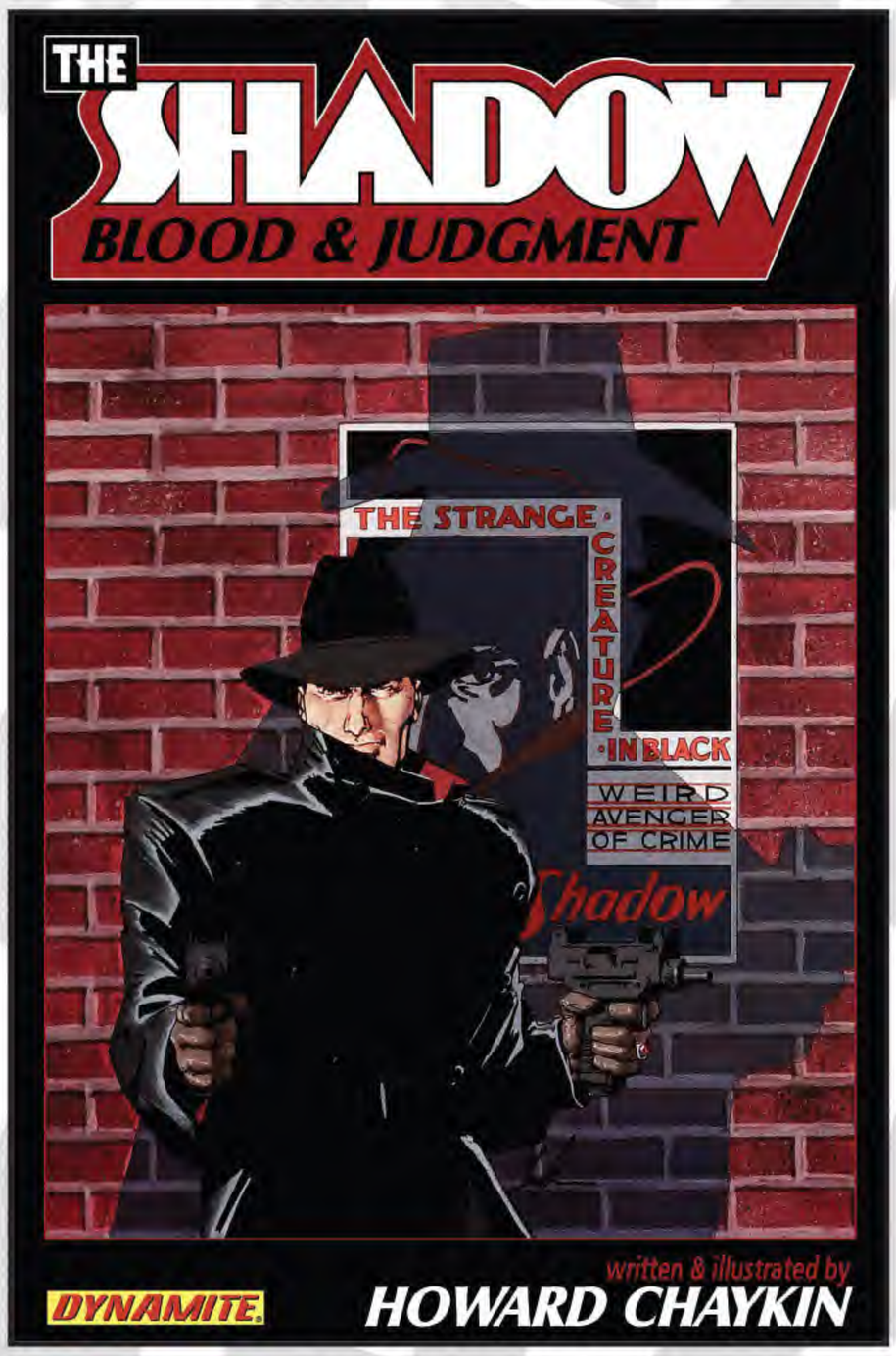
... AND WHEN HIS TIME CAME, THE SHADOW DIED... WITH NO APOLOGIES...

... AND NO REGRETS...

LENORE

For Orson Welles, the Master's Voice.

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THE SHADOW IS DEAD...

The Shadow is dead, a victim of a biological weapon... but his soul survives! Believing that their father's ultimate fate rests in the hidden city of Shambala, the twins Chang and Hsu-Tei carry The Shadow's body deep within the Tibetan mountains, only to find themselves hunted by Chinese authorities and the outlaw denizens of a town called Malice.

Meanwhile, without their master's guidance, the agents of The Shadow struggle to find their place in a violent, corrupt world. Intent on curing the disease of crime, the unhinged agent Twitch assumes a fearsome identity of his own as The Inoculator... but his brand of vigilante justice draws the attention of a deadly enemy. Will the network of agents survive an assault by The Avenger, a master of disguise as brutal and unrelenting as The Shadow himself?

Dynamite Entertainment proudly presents the complete, ground-breaking "Body & Soul" storyline by Andrew Helfer and Kyle Baker, plus two additional stories of The Shadow's past, revealing the secrets that bind his most loyal agents – Margo Lane, Harry Vincent, Burbank, and more – to his never-ending war!